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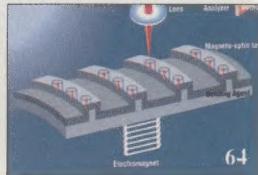
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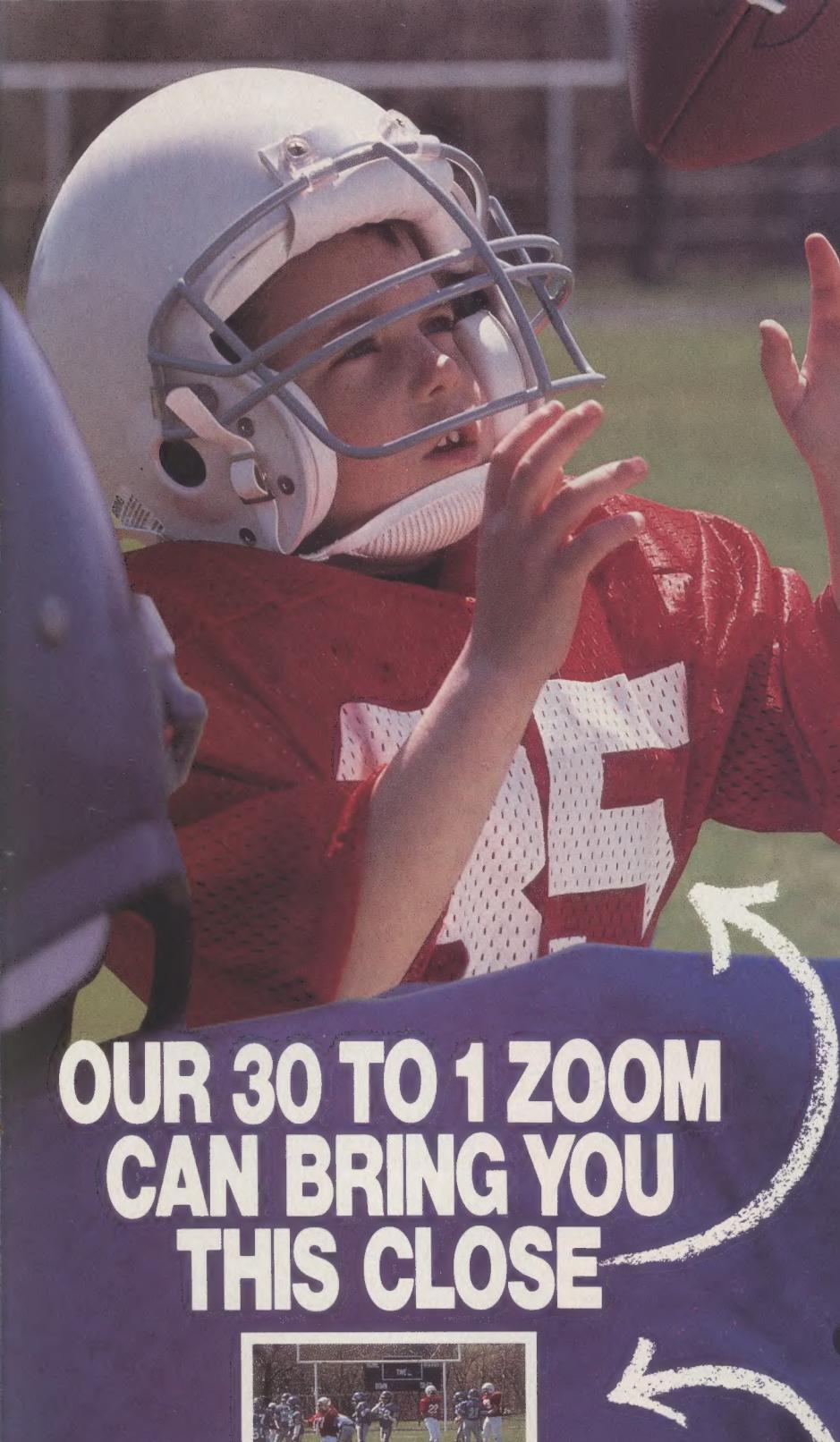
Cover:
Computers, camcorders and VCRs create the framework for multimedia video productions. Photograph by Jay Brenner

Video Magazine
Volume XIV
Number 8

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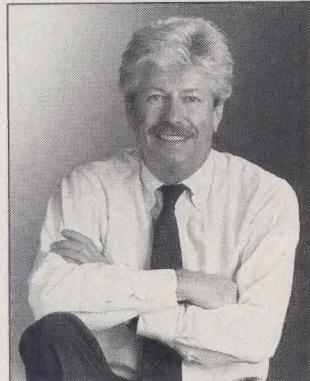
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CHANNEL ONE

Beta get busy, Sony



As I've indicated before, the video nerves of this magazine's readers are close to the surface and very sensitive. We've jangled them once again, this time with our September feature on beating "The Beta Maze." In a sidebar, we profiled the ferocious new 15th Anniversary Sony Beta machine recently unleashed in Japan. We then innocently invited our readers to let us (and Sony) know if they'd like to see this sleek new model introduced in the U.S.

The result? Flip to page 26 for a sampling of the letter avalanche that swamped our offices when the story hit (they're still coming in). Needless to say, no one in our passionate video audience wrote to ask that Sony not bring its revolutionary machine to these shores. So come on, Sony. Give us a break.

Lest we stand accused of any pro-Beta leanings, let me hasten to mention the good news about VHS—as detailed in our Super VHS update ("Silent Running") in October. As that story outlined, major strides have been made in improving an already superb VCR system. Let's hope all this will see S-VHS finally get off the ground.

To those other avid readers who've written to ask when we're going to review the controversial Go Video dual-deck VCR, ask no more. The answer is on page 74.

It's a pleasure to announce that Mike Ueda has joined Video Magazine as our man in Japan. Mike has toiled in the consumer electronic and video vineyards for nearly 20 years, both in his native Japan and in the United States. From his unique vantage point in Tokyo, Mike will be feeding us periodic reports on the Japanese video scene—what's happening there and what's coming here. Welcome aboard, Mike.

Our first Video/Scotch Videotape contest is history, and at presstime, I'm busy packing for a one-week tour of Cologne, Germany—and a trip to the giant Photokina Video Show—with the Grand Prize winners, Janice and Tom Donohue. The response to our first joint effort with Scotch was overwhelming, leading us to follow with an even more ambitious second competition ("Win Our Video Olympics", Oct. '90). We're adding several new categories, in addition to the original vacation theme of Contest One. Once again, the Grand Prize is a one-week trip to Europe, this time including a visit to the mammoth (400,000-plus attendees) Funkausstellung audio/video fair in Berlin. Why not give it a whirl?

If you need more contest details, drop us a line. We love to get letters.

Art Levis

Art Levis
Editor-in-Chief

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FEEDBACK

We aim to please

The September 1990 issue of *Video Magazine* has convinced me that this is the finest publication of its kind. I have learned more from three issues of this magazine than I have from any other source. Thanks for the great work.

Bob Cupp Jr.
Wheeling, West Virginia

Mastering the maze

"The Beta Maze" (Sept. '90) was not only very illuminating and interesting, it provided a real service to those of us still using and enjoying Beta VCRs and tapes. I'm glad that Sony has seen fit to continue to satisfy the Beta market. I

went into a rental store a while back and noted there wasn't a single Beta film. When I asked the manager why he didn't have any, he replied, "Beta is on its way out!"

"Well," I replied, "here is a customer on his way out, too!"

Lyle W. Eads
Melbourne, Florida

One more wish

Periodically, *Video Magazine* prints a "wish list" of features and ideas that should be considered for the next generation of products ("Our Guide to Video Valhalla," June '90). Here is my contribution: I'd like to see a VCR that can receive a digital program guide with up-to-the-minute information. This machine-

readable schedule would be transmitted by broadcasters as digital info in the dead zones of a TV picture signal. The VCR would save the information for future program selection. Programs could then be recorded without regard to football overtimes, presidential proclamations and other events that cause interruptions or delays that cannot be handled by today's VCRs.

Kirk Johnson
Santa Clara, California

Camcorder Canon-ade

I am confused about two points in your review of Canon's Al Mark II camcorder ("Videotests," July '90). Your report says the Canon has a 410,000-pixel CCD chip and a minimum illumination level rated at 7 lux, measured at 10.3 lux for 50 IRE units. Another magazine reports 450,000 pixels and a minimum illumination of 3.7 lux. Is this a discrepancy in the reports or am I misinterpreting something?

Vincent Albanese
Livingston, New Jersey

Editor's reply: Technical Editor Lancelot Braithwaite uses a professional rating standard of 50 IRE units in a repeatable test to yield the "measured" numbers reported in "Videotests." The "rated" lux number is supplied by the manufacturer.

The 410,000-pixel citation for the CCD chip was taken from Canon press materials for the Al Mark II.

For the record

"Windy City Windfall" (Sept. '90) inadvertently omitted information about Panasonic's WJ-AVE5 audio/video mixer, which was pictured. See this month's "New Products" department for full details about the mixer. The story also referred to Sony's EV-S550 deck as a Hi8 VCR when, in fact, it is a standard 8mm model.

Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address queries to Q & A, *Video Magazine*, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

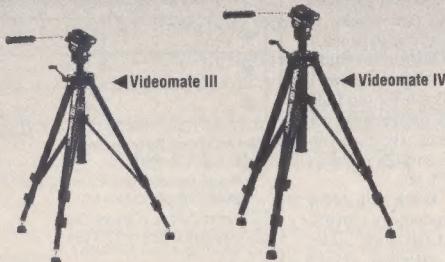
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PHILIPS



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screen that's cylindrical, not spherical, because professionals want vertical lines displayed as lines, not curves. Maybe that's why the Trinitron color system is the only one to win an Emmy Award for picture quality.

And the experts' choice in Trinitron TV's is the XBR Series—television that embodies the highest resolution and most advanced circuitry Sony has ever offered. For example, the Active Signal Correction of our 32" XBR50 examines the picture 60 times every second at 248 points on the screen. Whenever the picture is less than perfect, the ASC™ circuitry applies the principles of artificial intelligence to actively correct the picture.



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stereo tracks to create a "soundstage" that extends far beyond the TV itself. For an audio experience that extends far beyond that of any conventional TV.

The XBR Series also boasts a gratifying array of inputs, outputs and controls, plus a cabinet design of quintessential Sony elegance. Bringing you a viewing experience so powerful, so dramatic, that it can only lead to one question. Why own a television that's made just for amateurs when there's one that satisfies the professionals?

SONY®

LATE NEWS

Cable TV by satellite due this spring

The newest contender in direct-broadcast satellite transmission may also be the first on the air. SkyPix Corporation says it has made a breakthrough in digital video compression that will let it begin an 80-channel service early in 1991. Subscribers must purchase a \$700 system consisting of a two- to three-foot dish and a small receiver.

SkyPix will include news, sports, music and children's channels, and also offer pay-per-view movies. Subscribers select movies from an onscreen menu, and the receivers relay the choices to a central computer. SkyPix promises 50 movies will play simultaneously, and that the central computer will automati-



Dishing It Out:
SkyPix plans to transmit 80 satellite TV channels to owners of its new diminutive dish.

cally increase rotation of frequently requested movies.

HDTV jumps the gun

Faroudja Research has pulled its SuperNTSC high-definition television system out of the Federal Communications

Commission's HDTV testing program, and plans to bring the system straight to consumers. The company says the system doesn't require FCC approval because it already meets NTSC specifications, and that SuperNTSC TV sets should be available in two years.

Faroudja says SuperNTSC doubles the number of scan lines in NTSC, eliminates dot crawl and even produces a better picture on conventional TV sets. Stations in New York and San Francisco have already agreed to broadcast in SuperNTSC, and the low price of Faroudja's broadcast encoder — \$10,000, a pittance in the professional world — should persuade more to follow suit.

Videotape's new particle theories

Now that standard-grade VHS tape has become a commodity item, available everywhere from fruit stands to flea markets, tape manufacturers are focusing new efforts on high-grade videocassettes. Sony plans to heavily promote its new V VHS cassette line. The V stands for Vivax, a new coating formulation which Sony says provides tighter packing of magnetic particles. V tapes also get a new binder formulated for extra durability, and a new "V Orientation" process said to align particles more accurately.

Fuji's new twist is coating VHS and Compact VHS tapes with two layers of magnetic particles, instead of the usual one. The top layer is optimized for video signals, the bottom layer for the hi-fi audio signals recorded underneath. The company says the new process allows them to fine-tune the response of each signal.

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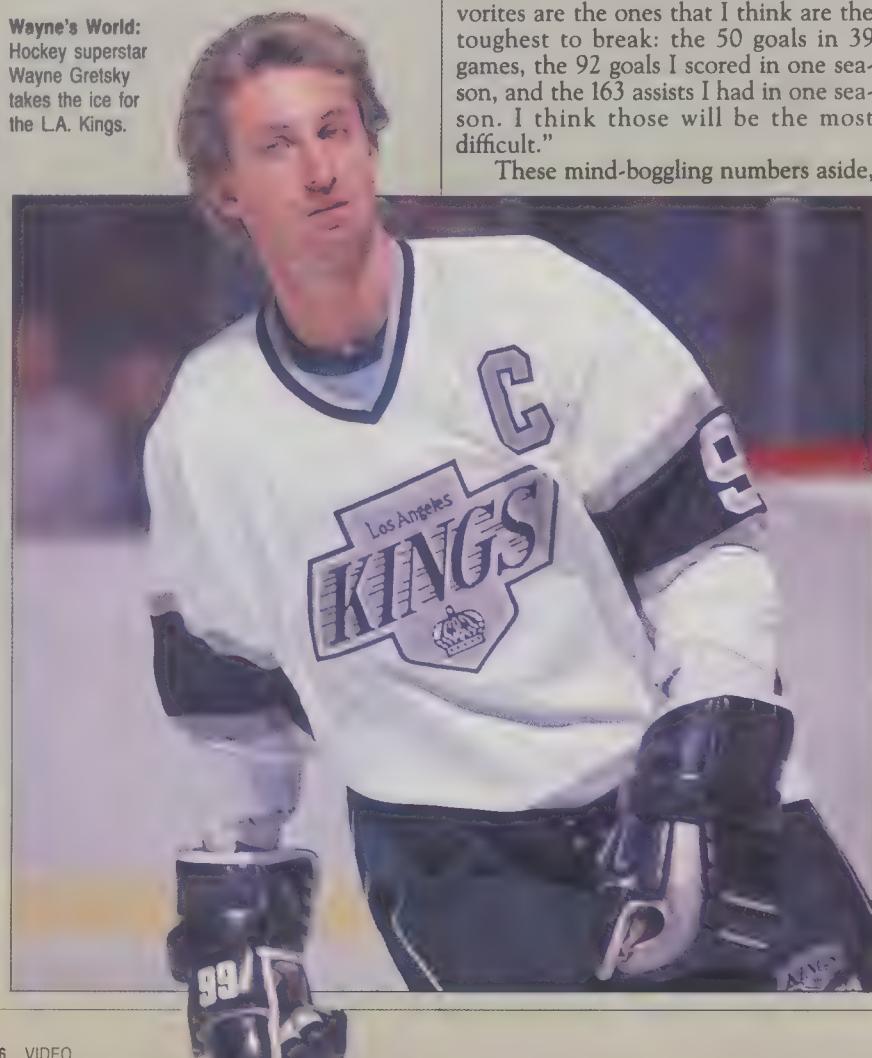
GAZETTE

The iceman cometh

In *Wayne Gretzky: Above and Beyond* (LIVE Home Video), fans of the Edmonton Oilers reveal their unspeakable pain at the loss of hockey's all-time greatest player to the Los Angeles Kings. "Where were you when it happened?" asks the videotape's producers, referring to the \$15 million sale of Gretzky's contract.

The fans' tales of tears and disbelief leave no doubt about Canada's feelings toward its favorite son, and the great Gretzky himself breaks down in scenes announcing the sale. But a couple of

Wayne's World:
Hockey superstar Wayne Gretzky takes the ice for the L.A. Kings.



years down the road, Gretzky has developed a measure of objectivity about his departure.

"Any time you leave something that's very cozy, it's difficult," Gretzky told us. "I played in Edmonton for ten years and made a lot of great friends. Beyond that, it was a great team—we won four championships. I had to weigh that before moving on, but if I had to do it again I wouldn't hesitate. L.A. has been more than I ever imagined it would be—the people in California have become very solid hockey fans, and we're drawing very well, close to 16,000 per game."

Recently named "athlete of the decade" by the Associated Press, Gretzky also has his personal achievements in perspective. "All my records are nice, and any record is an honor. But my favorites are the ones that I think are the toughest to break: the 50 goals in 39 games, the 92 goals I scored in one season, and the 163 assists I had in one season. I think those will be the most difficult."

These mind-boggling numbers aside,

Gretzky has his sights firmly set on the one thing that would top off his career. "I have one goal left, and that's to win a championship in L.A. If I finish my career with 2,500 or 3,000 points, it'll be nice, it'll be fun. But a championship for the Kings would be one of the happiest days of my life."

—KK

Viva Las Vegas!

How do you lure Soupy Sales, Jane Fonda, Hulk Hogan and Barry Manilow to a single room in the middle of the Nevada desert? If you're the Video Software Dealers' Association (VSDA), you hold your annual convention amid the glitz and gambling rooms of sunny Las Vegas. Held at the beginning of August, this year's event brought 15,000 tape and disc manufacturers, distributors and retailers inside from the 100-plus degree heat, where a variety of issues and trends that may soon affect consumers emerged between non-stop celebrity autograph parties.

Foremost on the minds of America's mom-and-pop video-store owners were the rising price of cassettes and the related question of simple survival, especially at a time when mega-chain rental stores are taking over the industry. Many of the complaints centered on Paramount Home Video's decision to release *The Hunt for Red October* at a suggested retail price of \$99.99, a \$10 jump from the standard rental-tape cost. If other studios follow suit, a rise in rental rates may well occur. But the studios' response—"improve customer service and the industry will thrive"—may prove a boon for weary renters. Don't be surprised, however, if generic commercials touting the virtues of home video—similar to recent spots espousing foods like milk and pork—appear soon in your living room.

At the other end of the price spectrum, Buena Vista Home Video made history when it announced that *Pretty Woman*—the most successful movie of the year and the highest-grossing film in Disney's history—would sell for \$19.99, the lowest price ever for a blockbuster movie on tape. The great disparity in prices among upcoming titles comes from distributors aiming individual re-



Happy Hooker: Richard Gere and Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*, which is being released on tape for \$19.99.

leases at either the rental or the direct-sale market. In light of these announcements, the two-tiered pricing system is clearly here to stay.

The growing appeal of laserdiscs was another hot topic at the VSDA convention. The idea of a sensible, divided market, with laserdiscs for collectable titles and cassettes for watch-'em-once rental movies, appears to be gaining steam. Especially welcome was word that the people behind Lucasfilm's THX home theater audio system will soon certify individual titles on disc for sound and picture quality. With disc distributors vying for this honor, the overall quality of laserdiscs is bound to improve. —KK

All this and D-2

If you won \$10 million in the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes, you'd probably rush out and get the hottest gear available — maybe a Pioneer LD-S2 laserdisc player, a Mitsubishi 120-inch rear-projection monitor and a Technics

THX sound system. You'd still have \$9,964,500 left over, though, and any true videophile would never waste that money on a house or investments. But you'd still need a VCR and, luckily, Sony has one with a price tag fit for a Ferrari.

The new \$81,000 DVR-18 professional D-2 digital VCR is probably the hottest deck you could actually go out and buy today. (Its big brother, the D-1, is a rare item even in the pro video field.) The DVR-18's back panel brandishes an intimidating array of 50 jacks, but with the help of a winning lottery ticket and a few adapters from Radio Shack, you could easily turn one into the ultimate home VCR.

What do you get for \$81,000? To start with, a 15-inch high, 128-pound chassis with an electroluminescent display guaranteed to fascinate those who scoff at spending more than \$250 for a VCR. And with minimal loss of picture quality through dozens of generations of editing, four channels of digital audio and nearly perfect slow- and fast-motion, the D-2 should have neighborhood video buffs salivating.

Of course, no one needs D-2 just to record *The David Letterman Show*, and in a world where movies on Super VHS are rare, 15-inch-long D-2 tapes are hardly likely to show up at video stores. So what does one do with an \$81,000 VCR? Ask a man who owns one — Pat Howley,

president of Post Perfect, a major New York City post-production house:

"We first used D-2 for music videos, largely because of its 96-decibel audio signal-to-noise ratio, which compares favorably to 70 decibels for a one-inch professional VCR with Dolby. Now we use it for commercials and film-to-tape transfers, too. The big advantages of D-2 are that it has no moire, and its variable-speed operation is extremely clean. D-2 also gives us flexibility in editing, because we can use three times as many generations of D-2 as we can with one-inch."

D-2's price might break the hearts of home Hitchcocks, but there's hope — Sony has introduced a portable D-2 deck for \$37,000. —Brent Butterworth



Pro Choice: Digital VCRs like Sony's DVR-18 have become a fixture at top video production houses.



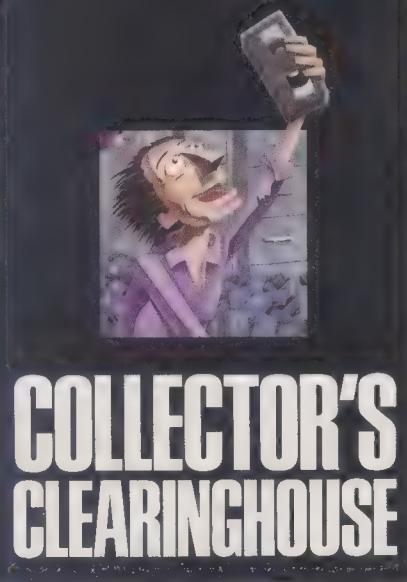
Loud and Clear. The U.S. Senate has passed a bill requiring manufacturers to include closed-captioned decoders in all TV sets, 13 inches or larger, manufactured after July 1993. Widespread use of decoders will give the hearing-impaired access to broadcast and video programming when away from home (such as in hotel rooms, for example) while lowering the cost of adding decoders. But even those without hearing problems may benefit from the bill. Ever had trouble understanding an actor with a thick foreign accent? Would you like to watch a favorite show without disturbing other members of your family? These problems may disappear at the touch of a button. At press time, the House was preparing its version of the bill, and President Bush was expected to sign the bill into law.

Incredible Shrinking Discs. A new variety of laserdisc called the video single disc (VSD) has hit the Japanese market. Intended for use in combi players, the

five-inch CD-sized discs hold five minutes of video with digital sound, and list for about \$8 in Japan. Though plans for its U.S. introduction have not been announced, VSD is seen as a possible replacement for the failing CD-Video format, which has confused the public with its odd combination of five minutes of video and 20 minutes of music. With vinyl singles virtually non-existent, and audio cassette singles not up to the quality desired by collectors, Casey Kasem may one day count down the nation's top 40 VSDs. Radio, however, will no longer be up to the task.

Preventive Video. A tape renter and a tape maker are teaming up for a child safety program called Kidprint. On scheduled days, parents can take children less than 12 years old to one of 1,300 participating Blockbuster Video stores and have them videotaped free of charge (with camcorders donated by RCA) after buying a special Scotch videocassette. The program preserves kids' images, voices and mannerisms in the event of their disappearance. Proceeds will be donated to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

COLLECTOR'S CLEARINGHOUSE



Looking for one last gem to complete your video collection? "Collector's Clearinghouse," a regular feature of *Video Magazine*, can connect you with fellow readers who may possess the objects of your heart's desire. Simply send us a letter describing exactly what you're looking for, and be sure to include your name and address.

Requests for copyrighted material must be for personal use only. You may offer to reimburse expenses, but the "Clearinghouse" is not open to requests for the purchase or sale of tapes. Please do not send a self-addressed envelope, as this is a reader-to-reader service only. Address all requests to: Collector's Clearinghouse, *Video Magazine*, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

•••••

I'm looking for the 23 episodes of *The Jimmy Stewart Show*, which aired on NBC starting September 1971. In March



Beach Buddies: Annette Funicello and Frankie Avalon go *Back to the Beach* in 1987's reunion film.

1972, *Hallmark Hall of Fame* aired the special production of *Harvey* with Jimmy Stewart and Helen Hayes. I also want the eight episodes of the CBS show *Hawkins*, which was shown in the 1973-74 season.

Ted Warner

Box 3206
St. Joseph, MO 64503

I am an avid collector of material relating to Annette Funicello, Olivia Newton-John, Linda Ronstadt and Barbra Streisand. I am looking for videos, television performances and interviews with these talented ladies. Thank you.

Matt Tunia

2215 Baxter Street
Los Angeles, CA 90039

•••••

I am interested in any footage of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis' nightclub act. Please write first and describe footage.

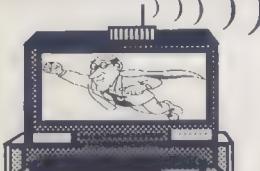
Robert Garcia

8481 Westmore Road, Apt. 21
San Diego, CA 92126

•••••

Wanted: Any or all of the New York Yankees' 1977 and 1978 World Series games, in the VHS format. I will gladly reimburse any expenses.

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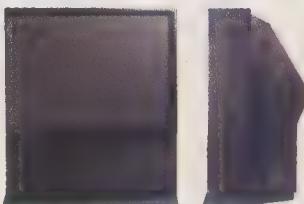

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COLLECTOR'S CLEARINGHOUSE

I am interested in obtaining episodes of the television series *The Gale Storm Show: Oh! Susanna* (1956-60) on VHS or 16mm film. It was my favorite program when I was growing up and was very popular. It was often in re-runs years ago, but hasn't been on for 20 years.

Robert Walsdorff
103 Oliphant Street
Box 247
Greenbriar, TN 37073

•••••
I have been trying, without success, to find for my own personal library a copy of *Das Boot*, a.k.a. *The Boat*, on laserdisc. It is listed in most catalogues but I can't find it.

James L. McBride
1950 Saint Francis Way
San Carlos, CA 94070

•••••

Although Hammer Film Productions Ltd. of England closed down production in the early '70s, I still admire their horror films. I am looking for VHS or Super VHS copies of Hammer films which are not available on pre-recorded tape. My highest priorities are *Countess Dracula* (with Ingrid Pitt in the lead role), *Vampire Circus*, *Taste the Blood of Dracula*,

Rasputin the Mad Monk (with Christopher Lee and Barbara Shelley) and *Kiss of the Vampire*. I will reimburse expenses and I am willing to make trades.

Scott C. Lewis
1730 Booneille Road
Bryan, TX 77803

•••••

I am very interested in obtaining videotapes of the television appearances and films of Boris Karloff, especially the more obscure ones. If you have anything to offer, or are looking for anything yourself, please contact me.

Beverly Buehrer
106 Wendell
DeKalb, IL 60115

•••••

I'm looking for "erotic art." No, this is not an oxymoron, but a valid, if sparsely populated, film category. A prime example, which I am trying to locate, is *La Marge/The Beast* (1976), a live-action film by Polish-born director Walerian Borowczyk, who is known primarily for his short animated films. *La Marge* is a bizarre, exotic, shockingly erotic version of the classic fantasy tale *Beauty and the Beast*. The usual romantic veneer is

stripped away to expose the truly perverse theme at its core: bestiality. As a collector, I would like to know about other films, of whatever length or language, which could fit the category of erotic art. I am definitely not interested in pornography. William P. Leighton
372 Central Park West, Apt. 20-E
New York, NY 10025

•••••

I'm looking for early TV appearances by David Letterman, especially guest-host shots on *The Tonight Show* and episodes of his morning talk show. Unfortunately, I didn't own a VCR till *Late Night* had been on a couple of years. I will cover tape costs and shipping expenses.

Fritz Schwartz
818 Greenwood Avenue NE, Apt. 10
Atlanta, GA 30306

•••••

Hallelujah! I am so happy to hear about a service that can help find videos of yesteryear without charging a fee. I am desperate, and I do mean desperate, to find videos of any and all episodes of *The Green Hornet* TV series with Bruce Lee. Please help me. I am at wit's end.

Mr. R.A. Baker
624 Tappanze Court
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

•••••

Sometime in 1987 I taped a show on PBS called *Musical Comedy Tonight III*, hosted by Sylvia Fine Kaye. I am looking for the first two installments, and for later shows if there are any. Also, in 1985 or thereabouts, there was a show on PBS featuring the work of four Broadway and/or Hollywood lyricists, among whom were Johnny Mercer and Dorothy Fields. It had an all-star cast, including Billy Eckstein and (I think) Anita Morris. I will be happy to reimburse expenses for copies of the above.

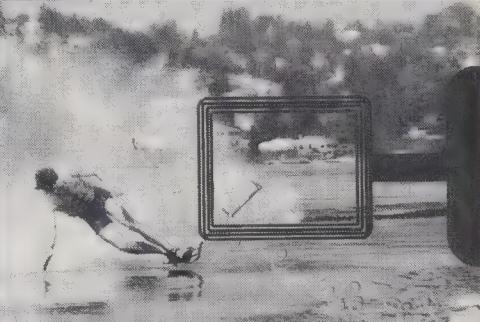
Harry Daley
10 Brandwyne Court
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

•••••

I am looking for a VHS copy of an early black & white version of the movie *1984*. This version was produced in 1956, and released by Columbia Pictures. It features Edmund O'Brien, Jan Sterling and Michael Redgrave. I am also looking for VHS material on Benny Hill, preferably material intended for British distribution. Much of his material is not available through ordinary channels, or suffers from severe editing. Any information would be appreciated. I will pay reproduction and shipping costs for good material.

Eugene D. Brennock
Box 6993
Orange, CA 92613-6993

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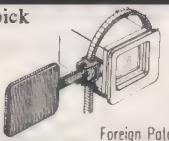
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Barbra Streisand — and Other Musical Instruments was the singer's fifth television special. It was shown in the early '70s and would make the perfect Christmas present for my mother, who has asked for it over the years. I will gladly reimburse expenses.

Susan Bailey

ID Cedarbrook Village
Rochester, NH 03867

•••••

I have been searching for a copy of Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* for my husband. No other version of *Macbeth* will do, as my husband is a fan of Polanski's work. Several years ago, we saw an advertisement from a distributor that was carrying the video. We thought we could wait till the tape came to local stores, but it never did. Please contact me if you know where I might purchase a copy or if you have one. I will reimburse expenses for a copy.

Gena Estrin

7511 Hesperia Avenue
Reseda, CA 91335

•••••

I have been collecting old movies for about nine years and have acquired many comedies (my favorite kind of film). However, I have been unable to find a copy of *The Ghost Breakers*, a 1940 film starring Bob Hope and Paulette Goddard, or the pilot of *The Great American Hero* TV series, which starred William Katt. I am looking for VHS, but I can also use Beta or 16mm film, and am willing to trade.

David Batchelor
766 First Street
Ogden, UT 84404

•••••

I'm looking for the movie *Road Show* with Carole Landis, Adolphe Menjou and John Hubbard. It was made in 1941, and the directors were Hal Roach, Hal Roach Jr. and Gordon Douglas.

Ed Gerlich
Blood Systems, Inc.
6210 East Oak St., Box 1867

•••••

I am looking for copies of ABC's *Monday Night Football*, dating from 1978 to the present, that feature the Oakland/L.A. Raiders. I am only interested in games in which the Raiders are on their home turf. Complete games, with or without commercials, will be greatly appreciated but, in some cases, partial games would be better than nothing. I am also looking for a tape of Super Bowl XV, with the Raiders and the Eagles, in complete form. I will reimburse costs for VHS tapes.

Tom Avallone
1215 Hassell Circle
Hoffman Estates, IL 60195 ■

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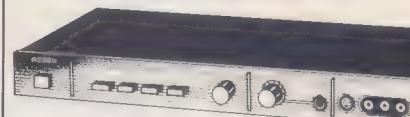
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YOUR MONEY'S WORTH

USED EQUIPMENT

Are second-hand VCRs & camcorders overlooked bargains or dubious deals?

Most Americans own a car, a TV set and a VCR. But while many buy used cars, few buy used video equipment. Why? Is none available? And if there is, are we wisely dodging dubious deals by avoiding used video gear—or overlooking a little-known bonanza of bargains?

In fact, used video gear is out there. You can probably find it within a few miles of your home: at an audio/video dealer, in the classified ads, at a local repair shop or at weekend garage sales. But there's no need to feel like you've missed out on a good thing. Video technology is still so new that until recently, few people ever considered trading in their old VCRs for new models. And because prices for video gear fell so rapidly in the '80s, the rare used piece that made it to market usually cost just as much as a new one.

But today prices have stabilized, and new VCRs and TV sets offer enough extra features to warrant trading in older units. As a result, the used video market is quickly heating up. Electronics dealers who have sold used audio for years have added used VCRs and camcorders to their shelves. For many, it's already big business. "If I had a bottomless pit of used VCRs, I could sell 'em all," says Julie Carlson, owner of Audio Replay, a Springfield, Massachusetts, audio/video establishment.

Obviously, this development won't excite cost-be-damned videophiles who demand the ultimate in performance. But to those whose video interests have strained their checking accounts to the max, a hi-fi second VCR for \$200 might sound pretty tempting. And those same budget-conscious videophiles may be wondering exactly what sort of secondhand video gear is available.

The reality is: no frills. Most used VCRs offer few modern conveniences like onscreen programming. Some don't even have wireless remote controls. A

few stereo and four-head models can also be found, but models with editing features and high-resolution formats are only just now hitting the market.

Prices run from about \$50 for a garage-sale junker, to around \$300 for an advanced model in good condition, to about \$1,000 for a barely used high-end

shooting indoors.

Used TV sets are another matter. They have been around for years, but videophiles shy away from them. Buying used equipment always represents a compromise: sacrificing quality for the sake of a low price. Most people find it makes more sense to compromise on a



deck. For videophiles, a used deck would probably make sense only as a second deck for editing, or for the kids' playroom.

Used camcorders age more gracefully, providing most of the features home shooters need. Their chief disadvantage is poor light sensitivity—only 16 lux in some cases, compared to the one-lux sensitivity found in some of today's camcorders. Prices start at about \$400 for basic VHS models. Videophiles who are dying for a camcorder but can't afford to shell out \$800 for a new one might consider a used model, if they don't mind using a video light when

second VCR or a camcorder, neither of which is used very often, rather than on a TV.

DEALING WITH DEALERS

When considering a piece of used equipment, buyers face two fundamental questions: Does it work? And is the price low enough to compensate for the unit's age and condition, and the increased likelihood that it will break down?

Although most people wouldn't trust their technical skills enough to test a used VCR, non-engineers can still buy used gear with at least some assurance.



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must hold all used merchandise for at least two weeks before reselling it.

Although this procedure doesn't guarantee that a used piece isn't hot, any reputable dealer will replace a unit found to be stolen with a similar model. And as long as the equipment is bought through a dealer, the buyer is not subject to prosecution.

After checking the dealer's warranty and return policies, buyers should inspect the unit's exterior — a beat-up cabinet often conceals beat-up internal parts. With VCRs, it's a good idea for a buyer to bring along a tape recorded on

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his or her existing deck. By playing this tape, the buyer can make sure that the used deck will play his personal library of tapes without tracking or compatibility problems. The tape should be expendable, in case the machine jams.

When checking out a camcorder, the buyer should bring along a blank tape and put the machine through its paces. It's better to test the camcorder indoors, where poor low-light performance shows up.

Even though these procedures may not sound thorough enough to check out sophisticated electronics, most deal-

ers rely on the same checks when evaluating potential purchases. "If it runs our test tapes okay, we figure it's pretty good," says Frank Grabiec, owner of Dyna-Tronics in Phoenix, Arizona.

However, the feeling of security a dealer lends to used video purchases doesn't come cheaply. "Typically, you'll pay significantly more to buy used video gear from a dealer than from an individual," says Roger Rohrs, publisher of *Orion Blue Books*, a series of used electronics price guides.

An alternative to dealers is reseller catalogs, such as the one published by Damark. They sometimes offer reconditioned merchandise, but seldom at bargain prices. For example, the August 1990 Damark catalog lists an NEC two-head VHS VCR for \$250 — the New York street price for a basic four-head machine.

PERUSING THE PAWNSHOPS

If your town doesn't have a used electronics dealer, it almost certainly has a pawnshop. But while an afternoon of searching the pawnshops might take you to some interesting neighborhoods, it probably won't turn up much video hardware. Most pawnbrokers stick to jewelry, 35mm cameras and fairly low-tech items. In fact, our search of eight

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YOUR MONEY'S WORTH

New York City pawnshops uncovered only five camcorders, one TV set and not a single VCR.

Nevertheless, a few pawnshops are getting into the used video act. A good example is Joe's Jewelry and Pawn of Atlanta, which sold hundreds of used VCRs last year. The shop keeps a technician on staff to check and repair the decks, and guarantees them for 30 days after purchase.

Buying from a pawnshop requires extra caution, because most shops do little more than slap a price tag on a used piece. Richard Weiner of Joe's Jewelry and Pawn suggests trying out every feature of a deck: "Play a movie in it, try out the fast forward and rewind, check the tuner. Sometimes the recorder works but the tuner doesn't. Likewise, check both the play and record functions. A messed-up head might play fine, but might not record. And if it's a newer deck, make sure it has the remote. A lot of features like channel programming only work from the remote, and it costs \$60 to \$70 to replace one."

"Always ask the pawnbroker what kind of return policy he has and what kind of warranty he'll offer," Weiner continues. "And check with the Better

Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been made against him."

A poll of our staff turned up further suggestions for screening used goods. "Q&A" editor Roderick Woodcock recommends that would-be buyers "take along a Phillips screwdriver and pull off the VCR's top. On machines made after 1983, this involves removing just a few screws." Examine the heads and the transport carefully. "If there's a lot of black goo inside the machine, it's a bad sign. The goo is a combination of tape residue and lubricant. It can be cleaned off, but it's a symptom of wear."

"It's too hard to take camcorders apart, so bring a pocket flashlight. Pop the tape hatch and look inside for debris and grime. While you're checking the functions, listen to the side of the camcorder to make sure there's no bumping or grinding in the transport," says Woodcock. "You have to be extra careful with camcorders. If you get a bad one, servicing can be expensive because they're so small."

THE LAST RESORT

If your local merchants don't produce big bargains, there are plenty of individuals who would love to unload a

VCR or a camcorder, possibly at an excellent price. But buying from an individual is much riskier than buying from a dealer or even a pawnshop, because if the gear turns out to be defective or stolen, a disgruntled buyer never knows whether or not the seller will make amends—if the seller can be found.

Although most people go right to the classified ads of the local paper when looking for most used goods, a better source for used video gear is a free-ad paper, the kind which runs nothing but classified ads. They cost about a dollar at most newsstands, and are usually chock-full of secondhand video gear. If you're *really* desperate, there's always garage sales and flea markets.

Checking out used gear sold by an individual is like checking gear sold by a pawnshop, but because there's no way to know where the equipment came from, the buyer also needs to check out the seller. "A lot of times, you can tell if an item's hot by asking the seller a few questions about it," says Drue Washington of Harry's Camera & Video in Studio City, California. "If it's stolen, he probably won't know much about how it works. He probably won't have any of

continued on page 53

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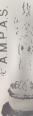
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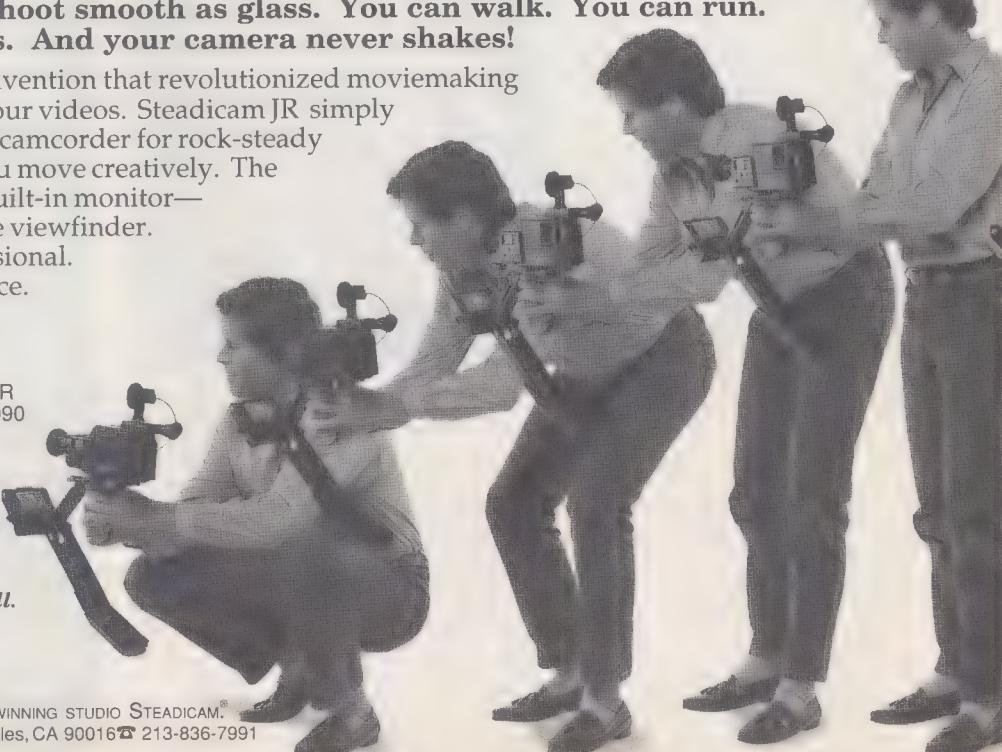
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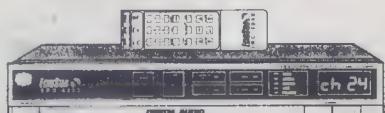
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READER FORUM

BETA NOW!

*Cries from the
heart for Sony's
Anniversary VCR*

We expected letters. What we didn't expect were cries from the heart. But that's what you sent us when we asked readers to write if they would like to help persuade Sony to offer its 15th Anniversary Beta VCR in the U.S. As we reported in "The Beta Maze" (Sept. '90), Sony has introduced an innovative new Beta deck in Japan. The VCR includes unique touch-sensitive LCD controls, the BI-S speed and a new head design among numerous other special features. However, Sony hasn't decided whether to sell the deck here.

Our readers feel no such qualms. They want the Anniversary VCR and say so passionately in over 100 letters, with not one naysayer in the batch. Letter after letter expresses the belief that "Beta is better." Some write of their love for the format and their loyalty to Sony VCRs. A few promise to "buy this product sight unseen." One reader pleads with Sony to "keep the faith."

We'll make sure your letters go to the right people at Sony, as promised, and we'll let you know their response in a future issue. In the meantime, here's what Betaphiles have to say about the prospect of a dazzling new Beta VCR:

Please do everything you can to talk Sony into bringing its 15th Anniversary Beta VCR to the United States. I would like to buy two of them—one for me and one for my children.

Jack H. Aldridge
Stinson Beach, California

Please help persuade Sony to bring the 15th Anniversary Beta VCR not only to the U.S. but to Canada, too.

Daniel Voyer
Rimouski, Canada

As a dedicated Betaphile, I ask Sony to please bring its 15th Anniversary Beta VCR into the U.S. I presently own four Beta machines, including the SL-



Voting By Mail: Some of the 100-plus letters asking Sony to sell its new Beta VCR in the U.S. and Canada.

HF1000, which is the finest VCR I have ever seen. I know I will buy at least one Anniversary model, at least two if it has flying erase heads. It would be a slap in the face to deny loyal U.S. Betaphiles the opportunity to purchase this.

Charles W. Jansen
Naples, Florida

Your description of Sony's 15th Anniversary Beta VCR has me chomping at the bit. I know us Beta junkies are few in number, but people who consistently demand quality tend to be in the minority. Please give us the opportunity to sample this tempting VCR. Linda M. Nemm
Port Washington, Wisconsin

I urge Sony to introduce its 15th Anniversary Betamax in the U.S. I currently own three Betamaxes—the SL-HF100, the SL-HF900 and the SL-HF860—and formerly owned four other units. As I upgraded, I sold the older VCRs to friends. All are still in use. While I have bowed to pressure and added an SLV-676 VHS VCR, so I can watch rental movies, and an 8mm CCD-V101 camcorder, Beta has always been my favorite.

Walter T. Feldt
Racine, Wisconsin

I am delighted to hear that Sony is keeping the Beta format alive and well—in

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READER FORUM

Japan. My Sony SL-HFR70 has operated without breaking down for many years and still delivers better video quality than my VHS VCR, which cost four times the price of the Beta. Where my Sony falls short is in programming and channel-setting convenience, areas in which the VHS camp excels. It appears that the 15th Anniversary VCR addresses these problems. I cannot say that price is no object in my lust to possess such a machine, but I can say that were it priced competitively, my next VCR purchase would not be VHS.

Gene Frazier
Ballwin, Missouri

I urge Sony to release the 15th Anniversary Beta VCR in the U.S. I have been a Beta owner for many years, and have preferred Beta when I record TV programs because I almost cannot tell that my tapes are TV programs. I also own a laserdisc player and play movies back on a 32-inch Toshiba monitor. I expect quality video.

But let's face facts: if the Anniversary machine is priced above what a good Super VHS VCR would cost, I will throw in the towel and go to S-VHS. If Sony has the wisdom to price this unit at a fair and justifiable level, I would be a serious prospective buyer.

Jim Grigsby
Brentwood, Tennessee

Please consider bringing in the 15th Anniversary Beta VCR. Super VHS certainly doesn't have the market wrapped up yet in the U.S., and is just starting to bring out features that Beta machines have had for some time: dual flying erase heads, quick-load mechanisms, multi-speed play, high-speed scan and so on. While the Anniversary VCR is not ED Beta, it offers the BI-S Super High-Band format, which some videophiles feel surpasses S-VHS and approaches ED Beta in color purity if not resolution.

James Lenaburg
Keller, Texas

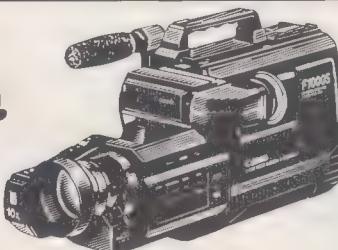
I have owned Sony Beta VCRs for 15 years, and I feel Beta has had an unfair shake from VHS. Between my son (who has my old SL-2300, which is still going strong), my step daughter and myself, we have three Beta VCRs. Two years ago I invested in Super VHS with JVC's HRS-7000U and, although I do most of my taping in S-VHS, I still rent movies and timeshift in Beta. I would love to see Sony come out with a VCR like my SL-HF400, only with a clear still frame, 320-line resolution and a 2-week/8-event timer.

David Derosier
Racine, Wisconsin ■

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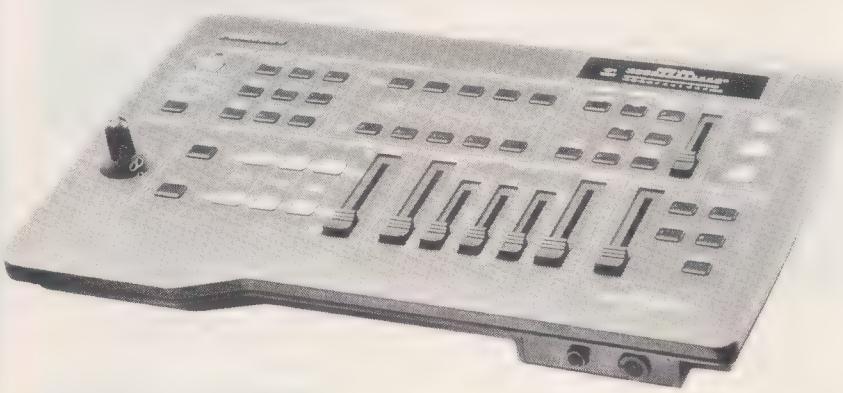


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EDITED BY BRIAN CLARK

NEW PRODUCTS



Panasonic mixer offers flexible effects

The Panasonic WJ-AVE5 digital audio/video mixer offers a great variety of digital special effects, including still frame, strobe, mosaic and paint. Ninety-six different wipes are available in a number of colors and shapes, and a picture-in-picture feature allows a complete image to be used in a rectangular wipe. Wipe size is adjustable, as is placement of the image. The color and speed of fades can also be controlled. A digital synchronizer permits mixing of Y/C signals with any other video source and the unit's audio mixer has three stereo inputs and a microphone input.

Price: \$1,800.

For additional information, circle No. 153 on Reader Service Card.

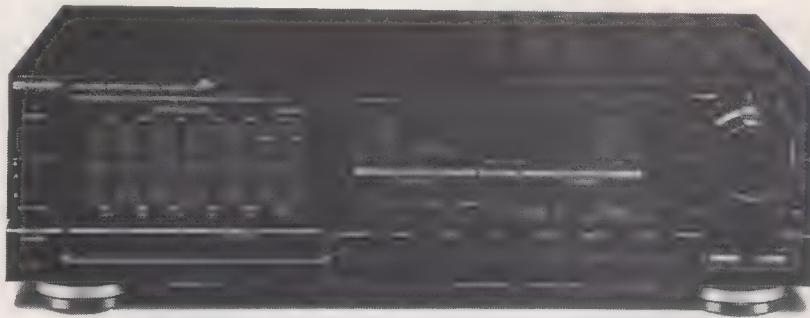


New features for Mitsubishi receiver

Mitsubishi's M-R8010 audio/video receiver is its first to include Dolby Pro-Logic surround sound, onscreen menu displays and a programmable remote. The surround sound feature has presets for hall, club and arena. The onscreen menus help a user calibrate the surround and variable delay settings, as well as preset AM and FM stations. There are onscreen displays of all functions. The programmable remote controls up to eight audio or video components, and a record selector feature allows the recording of one audio or video source while listening to or viewing a second. The unit has six A/V inputs.

Price: \$1,399.

For additional information, circle No. 154 on Reader Service Card.



Sharp announces affordable A/V receiver

Sharp's SA-R56AV audio/video stereo receiver has two video inputs and two video outputs. Other inputs are for turntables, audiotape decks and CD players, with a set of record out plugs for audiotape. The unit uses a 65-key remote control, and features an AM/FM tuner with 30 station presets, a five-band equalizer and a six-function selector. Audio features include surround sound capability and X-bass circuitry, which raises bass output to enhance lower frequencies. The SA-R56AV delivers 55 watts per channel.

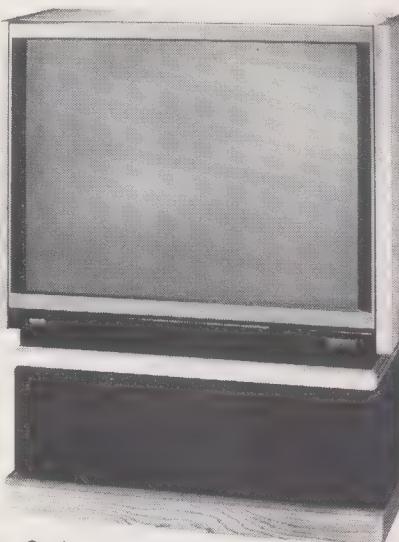
Price: \$349.95.

For additional information, circle No. 155 on Reader Service Card.

Prism adds 45-inch projection TV

The PTM-4597S 45-inch projection TV is the newest entry in Panasonic's Prism line. Surround sound capability, SAP and dbx noise reduction highlight the audio features, along with an onscreen seven-band graphic equalizer and variable audio output jacks. A dynamic focus circuit continuously adjusts the voltage between the center and edge of a picture that is produced from an aspherical hybrid lens system. Other picture features include comb and notch filters, an S-video input jack and two A/V inputs. A channel search feature freezes frames from three channels.

Price: \$2,699.95.



For additional information, circle No. 156 on Reader Service Card.

Zenith camcorder packs booster battery

A dual battery system allows Zenith's VM7170 VHS camcorder to run without interruption for up to three hours. The f/1.4 lens has an 8:1 power zoom and produces 330 lines of resolution using a half-inch, 270,000-pixel CCD image sensor. The 7170 has a 3-lux light rating. Editing features include a flying erase head, zero frame editing, picture search and a background music input that automatically balances a mix with the main audio. Iris and backlight compensation are automatic or can be preset. Other features include HQ circuitry for sharper images, digital title memory, a DC light adapter and a built-in speaker.

Price: not available.



For additional information, circle No. 157 on Reader Service Card.



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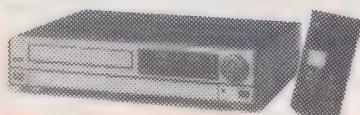
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S-VHS: Automatic assemble and insert editing with eight-scene memory and preview mode for editing ease. Video-on-sound feature dubs video over prerecorded hi-fi tracks.

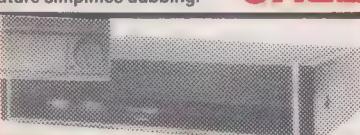
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HITACHI VT-S730A

S-VHS: Title/date recording adds personal touch. Barograph-style "tape time remaining" display eliminates recording surprises. Synchro-edit feature simplifies dubbing.

CALL



TOSHIBA SV-F990

S-VHS: Optical scanner digitizes graphics for superimposition. Other digital tricks include color correction, fades, wipes, negative/positive, titles, and noise reduction.

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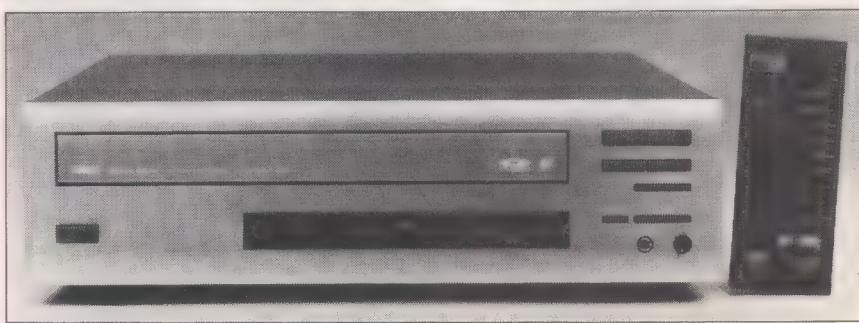


Pentax camcorder employs fuzzy logic

The PV-EM100A 8mm camcorder from Pentax employs fuzzy logic focusing technology. Its f/2 lens, with 6x power zoom, relies on a 270,000-pixel CCD image sensor and delivers images down to 4 lux. Editing features include a flying erase head, audio/video fade to white, scene search and eight-color reversible titling. The PV-EM100A weighs 1.75 pounds.

Price: \$1,299.

For additional information, circle No. 158 on Reader Service Card.



Yamaha combi deck delivers high resolution

Yamaha's CDV-1700 combi player produces 440 lines of resolution and a signal-to-noise ratio of 48 decibels. The unit uses 8x oversampling and 18-bit twin digital-to-analog converters. An S-video output assures the best possible picture. The quick index feature scans CAV discs at a selected speed, while five-minute quick search (which jumps in either direction) is employed for CLV discs.

Price: \$699.

For additional information, circle No. 159 on Reader Service Card.

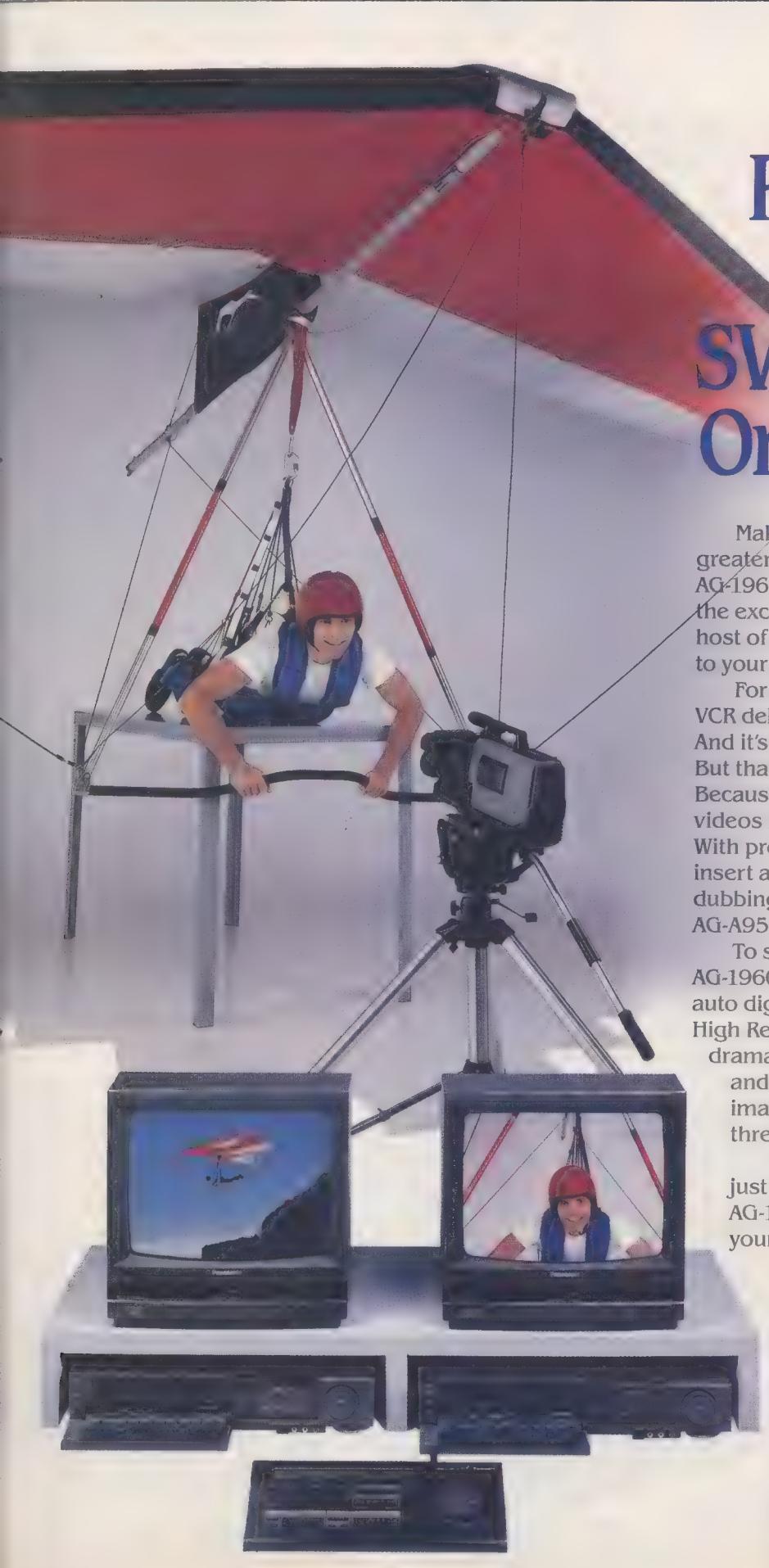
Hitachi fields full-size camcorder

Hitachi's VM-5300A VHS camcorder has a programmable synchro edit feature that transfers any six scenes onto a second recorder. The f/1.4 lens has a 10:1 variable-speed zoom, and uses Hitachi's Accu-Shot AX automatic exposure system. The low light rating is 2 lux. Editing features include a flying erase head, scene search, mic mixing and A/V dubbing. Other features include a two-hour battery pack, a variable-speed shutter, a cordless movie light and a character generator that superimposes.

Price: \$1,199.95.



For additional information, circle No. 160 on Reader Service Card.



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STATE OF THE ART

Q & A

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

Snap judgments

Q I bought a Solidex VHS tape rewinder for about \$15 and used it to rewind a lot of tapes without any trouble. But when some tapes get to the end, the plastic leader snaps. Should I continue to use the rewinder?

Mike Anderson
Kingsburg, California

A I've discovered that the clear leaders on some tapes tend to become brittle as they age. An easy way to lessen the chance of snapping the leader is to slow down the rewinder motor. You can do this by replacing the 12-volt AC adapter (included with most rewinders) with a 9-volt adapter. Radio Shack offers one with several plugs and reversible tip polarity, which should work for almost any rewinder. The rewinder will work more slowly, but it will be less likely to snap leaders.

Curing the bends

Q When I play some of my VHS tapes, the upper right side of the picture bends to the right. What causes this and how can it be corrected?

Vasil Jovahovic
Ridgewood, New York

A Picture bending at the top of the screen, to the left or the right, is an indication of a mismatch between the diagonal video tracks recorded on the tape and the rotating video heads that play them back. Ideally, the heads should be perfectly aligned with the tracks, so that the center of the head traverses the center of the track. This is

Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address queries to Q & A, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

almost always the case when the same VCR that records a tape is later used to play it.

Tapes made on other VCRs, rental tapes, or tapes that have stretched or shrunken due to poor storage and handling (rental tapes left to cook in hot cars are prime candidates) have their video tracks altered, with the result that the heads in the VCR can't play them correctly. If the tracks are shorter than they're supposed to be, the picture bends to the right, while longer than normal tracks cause the picture to bend to the left.

Sometimes, this picture skewing isn't always visible on the TV, especially if the set is a newer model with circuitry that can correct for minor misalignments. But with older VCRs and/or poorly maintained tapes, there's not much that can be done. To determine whether your equipment or the videotape itself is the culprit, try the tape with a different TV set or VCR. If the bands disappear, consider getting new gear.

Lost generations

Q What would deliver the best result: (1) editing 8mm camcorder tapes to an 8mm VCR, then copying the edited tape to VHS, or (2) editing the camcorder tapes directly to a VHS deck?

Sebastian Caputo
Palm Harbor, Florida

A If you're producing a single, edited VHS copy of your 8mm tapes, option two is the way to go, since the tape that results will be only one generation away from the original.

If you're copying the edited master to give away, though, both options will work equally well, because both produce third-generation VHS tapes. The 8mm-to-8mm route may provide a slight increase in quality over 8mm to VHS, but it's a subtle difference. Also, unless you purchase an 8mm VCR with PCM audio, you won't be able to perform audio dubs, which many VHS machines can.

Editing 8mm originals to Hi8 or Super VHS produces a higher-quality edited master and better distribution copies, but adds to the price of your studio. ■

5 WAYS TO CATCH THE Action!



CHINON

DIGITAL POWER

For those who want *digital effects* teamed with the *extra power of an 8X zoom*, the C8-SC98 is the *Pocket 8* to pick.

Its 8-way digital fades give you an incredible creative tool to work with—right as you tape. Basic fade-to-white is spiced up with the addition of a “random” feature that step-by-step pixelates the screen, until it seems to be covered by snowfall. A center-framing “diamond” pattern fades in or out with either a crisp, sharp edge or a soft, almost fuzzy border that can put extra visual emotion in your videography. Or you can choose the same effects with a square frame.

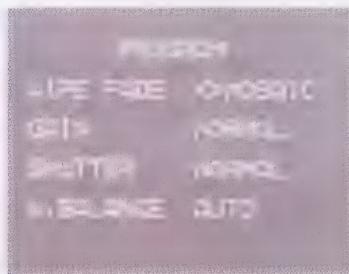
For a punchier look, try “*diamond mosaic*”—it frames the picture with a multitude of tiles—or “*square stripe*” which uses an overlay of square bars to achieve a professional and innovative scene transition.

The addition of a freeze key lets you stop seven of these fade effects at selectable stages—creating, in effect, framed moving images that can be an invaluable addition to any home video album.

But don't get the C8-SC98 for the digital effects alone; even without a single effect, this camcorder delivers all the picture brilliance of the 8mm format teamed with the best imaging technology has to offer.

CREATIVE POWER

- The C8-SC98 features eight digital fade effects for professional scene transitions, openings and closings.
- A freeze frame function added to the fades lets you create artistically framed images for a video album.
- An 8X zoom with auto focus even in macro increases both your range and creative versatility.
- The C8-SC98 comes with Pocket 8 technology: high-speed shutter settings, ultra-precise auto white balance and optional manual focus for totally selective focus control—even a tilting viewfinder for a ground level perspective.



Viewfinder Menu Display



DIGITAL SPECIAL EFFECTS



NORMAL



SQUARE STRIPE



DIAMOND HARD



DIAMOND SOFT

C8-SC96



No consideration is more important in home video than the way your shoots look. No matter how momentous the event—be it baby's first steps or his high school graduation—videos that are fuzzy, jittery or just plain out of focus are videos you'll soon stop watching.

Chinon's C8-SC96 is designed to make video look its best. Not only does it process the picture to the demanding specifications of Pocket 8 technology, it is built to capture the action even when you're a part of it and not just standing at the sidelines.

Easy to hold, tiny and light, driven by deceptively simple menus through a viewfinder (a viewfinder you can tilt, may we add)—this is one machine that doesn't stand between you and the moment. After all, you want

to remember the action, not the camcorder.

New imaging technology has made the Pocket 8 possible. As the complex mechanisms that control TTL autofocus get smaller and move closer to the aperture, they can achieve quick, nearly broadcast-standard focus changes with a minimum of movement. Meanwhile, the addition of a tiny but powerful flying erase head makes sure your focus won't be disrupted by noisy scene-to-scene cuts.

It's Pocket 8 technology streamlined so you can live the moment and know your pictures will come out right.



SUPER CONVENIENCE

Facts At A Glance

- Incredibly lightweight — weighs only 23.8 ounces.
- Flying erase head for noiseless scene transitions and edits.
- Viewfinder menu for selecting gain control, high speed shutter speeds and white balance.
- Automatic power shut off conserves battery power.
- One hour battery weighs only 5.2 ounces.
- Rapid one hour battery recharging.
- One button control for simple, rapid battery removal.

THE MEMORY MAKERS

Pocket 8 is Chinon's high-tech, ultra-compact answer to today's home videotaping needs. Whether you're recording your family's most memorable moments at home or on the road, these streamlined camcorders serve up the convenience you need and the quality your memories demand.

What makes the Pocket 8 line so special? It's more than just the advanced digital effects and 8X zoom on the C8-SC98, and more than the unparalleled simplicity and point-and-shoot ease of

the C8-SC96. It's knowing that you're using a camcorder built to the most exacting specifications by an industry leader in photo optics and imaging, resulting in crystal clear picture reproduction of your most treasured moments.

The science behind this consumer innovation begins at the imaging chip, an often neglected but all-important part of video technology. Chinon has engineered and designed a $1/3$ -inch CCD with 250,000 pixels in both its Pocket 8 models—and it is this tiny silicon element that generates nearly 500 stun-



POCKET 8 FEATURES AND BENEFITS

- The 8mm format offers the ultimate in compact camera design while delivering uncompromised picture clarity, color accuracy and quality.

- The Pocket 8 line has the right model for you. For advanced digital effects and a more powerful zoom, the C8-SC98 fits the bill. If point-and-shoot convenience is more what you need, try the C8-SC96.

- For easy portability, these models are incredibly lightweight. Both weigh under 26 ounces, which eliminates the aches and hassles from carrying and shooting.

- High end CCD imaging chips with

- 250,000 pixels of picture information provide almost 500 lines of horizontal resolution—a difference you'll notice.

- Pocket 8 camcorders are designed with the user in mind. In-viewfinder displays let you program camera right through the viewfinder—a viewfinder that tilts a full 90 degrees. That and conveniently-placed controls show Chinon's commitment to ease of use.

- Extra perks like selectable high speed shutters and manual overrides on fully-automatic functions such as white balance and light sensitivity indulge the

- video artist in you, and make sure you always get the best possible picture.

- Pocket 8 camcorders come with everything you need to go out and shoot videos. Standard accessories include an AC adapter, a battery pack, an RF adapter and all the cables for playback through any TV set. Other accessories include a carrying case and car battery cord.

- An investment in Pocket 8 is protected. With a unique Double Protection Warranty, Chinon puts its money where its mouth is.

COMPACT 8MM CAMCORDER



ning lines of horizontal resolution. Teamed with autofocus, low light taping capabilities and automatic white balance and iris, this CCD is part and parcel of the Pocket 8's superlative picture playback capability.

But you won't be thinking about chips and irises when you're shooting with a Pocket 8. In fact, you won't be thinking about anything but the action in front of you—be it a birthday, Christmas or Chanukah or the smile on a June bride.

These ultra-lightweight units (both weigh under 26 oz.) offer one-touch operation for all vital operating features, with buttons conveniently laid out along the side panel for easy access. As a result, the action doesn't stop because you don't have to fumble with controls and mechanisms. With Pocket 8, you won't miss a moment.

Further convenience perks include a moveable viewfinder with menus displayed right inside—a sort of in-camera instruction manual that makes operation a breeze. Otherwise, everything you need is right in front of you; standard in-viewfinder information displays include recording status, battery and dew warnings, shutter speed, gain, white balance, and tape ending. If you're using the digital C8-SC98, all the info on its advanced wipes and fades are in the viewfinder too (read all about these digital effects on the next page).

The bottom line is this: when you're in the midst of the action, you want to focus on having fun with your family and friends—and let the camera focus on the details. Pocket 8 was designed with a keen eye for ergonomics. The system's macro autofocus lens (with 8X zoom on the C8-SC98 and 6X on the C8-SC96) features an inner focus optical system that is quicker to respond and significantly more accurate than many others on the market—right down to the front lens element.

The end result? Clear, brilliant memories preserved in such a way that you'll want to watch them again and again—which, after all, was the point to begin with. Don't you wish your parents had one when you were a kid?



CHINON EZ MOVIE / DIGITAL IV

It's called the CV-T124, but better known as the **EZ Movie Digital IV**. It's Chinon's super-luxurious, cutting-edge VHS video camcorder.

Consider its zoom power: A 12X optical zoom enhanced by a two stage, digital 96X zoom tops off an A/V package that includes a 7-speed adjustable shutter, full audio and video dubbing and an optional 72-symbol character generator that offers four sizes eight pages of memory.

The Digital IV is everything you need to make professional-quality home videos. And it's all fine-tuned with two-stage electronic image stabilization.

In the field, tools like a built-in speaker with volume control, a camcorder-powered cordless enhancement light and remote control make sure you're always prepared. Meanwhile, black, white and mosaic fade in/

fade out give transitions as seamless as they are interesting.

For effects, try "digital mirror image"—it records a symmetrical image of the left half of the picture onto the right. Teamed with a digital strobe, it's really something to see. And if you freeze a frame, your audio will keep rolling.

The Digital IV is also a complete editing studio (consider automatic edit standby and camera search that lets you find scenes while in recording mode, for example). These features complement luxuries like time lapse recording and an integral self-timer.



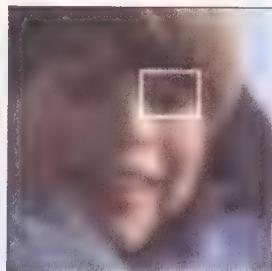
DIGITAL IV QUICK TAKES

Facts At A Glance

- The Digital IV's two-stage digital zoom expands the standard tele-photo 90mm focal length by 30X and 96X, respectively.
- The built-in speaker can save a shoot: if the audio didn't pick up right, you know on the spot.
- The Digital IV has unique add-ons like a stop watch function (that can be recorded or added in editing), and a manual iris for precision artistic control.



The Chinon CV-T124 EZ Movie/Digital IV is one tool that takes home video making as seriously as you do.



**12X ZOOM COMPARISON ABOVE
THE DIGITAL 96X ZOOM COULD ACTUALLY
ENLARGE AND ZERO IN ON THE PUPIL OF
THE SUBJECT'S EYE.**

When you carry a Chinon EZ MOVIE camcorder into the field, you'll have what you need when you need it.

Quality audio starts from the moment the sound waves hit the microphone (where sensitivity can be adjusted and wind noise can be deterred) and doesn't end until you've tweaked it to perfection.

Attention to video begins with a precision-crafted lens, and pictures are immaculately handled by high-tech components from a system autofocus to four recording heads. And while you're watching the final product, automatic tracking keeps signals perfectly in line.

Whether it's the CV-T84 EZ Movie or the CV-T73 EZ Movie/Digital III, Chinon VHS videomakers offer extras like color enhancement lights, A/V dubbing and synchro editing to an already advanced assembly.



EZ-MOVIE CV-T73

The CV-T84's auto focus, iris, and white balance combined with its two-lux low-light capability and an adjustable, high-speed shutter make sure your shots are always their best. And the Digital III adds in three-way pic-



EZ-MOVIE CV-T84

ture fade, six-way digital image mix and digital strobe.

Both camcorders offer high-end creative tools like self timer and time lapse recording.

They give you a battery of options in an easy-to-use, fully-loaded VHS package. No wonder equipment reviewers are raving.

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CV-T84

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SPECIAL REPORT

Hi8 and Flyaway feed a Mideast hotline

BY ROBERT ANGUS

When President Bush launched Operation Desert Shield, the banner under which tens of thousands of troops, armed with conventional weapons, were rushed to Saudi Arabia's defense, a couple of thousand television correspondents followed. But some network news troopers were armed, by broadcast standards, with very unconventional weapons—Hi8 camcorders and VCRs.

Remarkably, many of the video journalists covering the Iraq confrontation rely on a marriage between space-age electronics and the type of video components available to ordinary video buffs. If the practice proves successful—as it already appears to be—it could significantly change the way TV reporters cover dangerous, fast-breaking events.

CNN, once again, is taking the point position. The network pioneered the use of Hi8 for TV news-gathering during the Tiananmen Square massacre. CNN had just given its crews in Beijing Hi8 gear when the student demonstrations broke out. Reporters quickly discovered that large professional cameras stood out—while tiny hand-held camcorders could pass for tourist toys.

Yet their quality was virtually indistinguishable from that produced by pro-level Betacam, according to CNN's Charlie Hoff, who is in charge of handling the network's logistics in the Middle East. Now, more than a year later, CNN has 61 four-person crews in the Middle East—and most have Hi8 equipment.

A story Hoff likes to tell about a rival correspondent, ABC's Forrest Sawyer, brings home the value of the small camcorders. Coming down to breakfast on his first morning in Baghdad, while travel in and out of Iraq by Americans was still possible, Sawyer was startled to find the hotel lobby full of armed troops. Sawyer doffed his tie, swung his Hi8 camcorder case onto his hip and played the part of tourist.

Footage shot in the field makes up only a part of CNN's Middle East cover-



As It Happens: A CNN reporter prepares to go live, a Flyaway feed begins, and an Iraqi spokesman.

age. CNN also uses live interviews and correspondent reports from its base at a hotel in Amman, Jordan. It draws as well on appearances by Saddam Hussein and other leaders in the region, which it records from terrestrial broadcasts or from Arabsat, the Arab-owned satellite that services the region.

To get the programming back to headquarters in Atlanta, CNN has equipped its Middle East contingent with another marvel of miniaturization, a satellite uplink station known as a Flyaway. The system, which includes a seven-foot satellite dish, ships in 16 bags as accompanied airline luggage. It can be assembled by two people in just over an hour, but in this case a week passed before Jordanian authorities permitted CNN to unpack the Flyaway and set it up on the hotel's roof.

Meanwhile, CNN technicians used the time to set up a full-scale Beta and 8mm editing studio, a facility that's not usually needed, in a suite downstairs. "Wherever Flyaway operates, we have to pay that government's telecommunications department for uplink time to the satellite. Normally, we send ev-

erything back to Atlanta in raw form, and the editing is done here," Hoff told us during one particularly hectic day. "But because Jordan charges extremely high rates, we decided to do the editing in Jordan."

Even as Hoff spoke, the sounds of organized chaos permeated CNN's Atlanta control room: News developments were breaking from Kennebunkport to Cairo. Critical decisions were being made on the run. And a CNN crew was struggling to set up a second Flyaway in the Saudi desert.

Hoff says that CNN is constantly on the lookout for good Middle East footage shot by amateurs, but hadn't been offered any by presstime. "Most of the people who escaped were more intent on getting out than shooting home movies." The one really dramatic amateur video to come out of Kuwait—showing Iraqi troops looting homes and anti-Iraqi graffiti on walls and bridges—was shot by a freelancer who sold it to one of CNN's competitors for \$25,000. "He's probably kicking himself now," Hoff chuckles. "We would have offered a lot more." ■

VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 560

Toshiba 32-inch monitor/receiver

Toshiba's CF3264K is one of the least expensive 32-inch monitors. As with other large Toshibas in this year's lineup, the screen captions may be switched from English to Spanish or French. Toshiba's emphasis on simplicity and clean lines lends the large set a compact, handsome appearance.

Its other features include picture-in-picture (PIP) and a remote control that can operate certain VCRs, laserdisc players and cable boxes. A user can switch between two RF inputs and three video inputs, one of which may be S-video. There's also a loop-through output for a cable box.

The Toshiba's MTS/SAP tuner may be switched to mono for weak or noisy stations. Its audio capabilities include a ten-watt-per-channel stereo amplifier, jacks for external speakers, and a variable line out for feeding a hi-fi system. Outputs for video and fixed-level stereo audio can feed a VCR. Flesh tint compensation, video noise reduction, channel captioning, an onscreen clock, an off timer and picture adjustments for the PIP round out the features package.

Description. The CF3264K is soft gray with a black stripe tube. The slim bezel gives the set its compact look. The five-inch-high base houses the speakers



Giant Economy Size: At \$1,999, the CF3264K costs hundreds less than most other 32-inch TV sets.

and controls. The shiny black area between the speakers contains the power button and indicators for power, stereo and SAP. The central part folds down to reveal buttons for menu, adjust up and down, reset, audio/video source, volume

up and down and channel up and down.

The Toshiba's deep top panel seems perfect as a VCR shelf, although that's a bad idea because of the picture tube's magnetic field. An eight-inch-deep bulge covers the back of the picture

Toshiba CF3264K 32-inch TV



VIDEOTEST PHOTOGRAPHS: LES MORSILLO

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$1,999

Weight:
150 pounds

Dimensions:
29-1/2 x 31-1/8 x
22-7/8 inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
117 W

Screen Size:
32 inches

Speaker Size:
two—5-1/4 x 2-3/4-inch

oval speakers

Type of Tuning:
frequency synthesis

Method of Tuning:
programmable up/down
scan on set; scan plus
direct access on remote

**Broadcast Tuning
Range:**
2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable Tuning Range:
125 channels—2 to 13,
A-8 to A-1. A to I, J to
W, AA to ZZ, AAA.

BBB, 65 to 94 and 100
to 125

Remote Control:
IR wireless with VCR/

cable/TV function
switch, programming in-
dicator, control rocker
and buttons for menu,
antenna 1/2, recall,
power, mute, 10-digit
keypad, 100-channel
return, volume and
channel up and down,
MTS, TV/video, timer/
clock, locate, VCR

channel up and down,
still/release, swap and
source
RF Inputs: 2
RF Outputs:
1, loop-through of
ant. 1 input

**Video/Stereo Audio In-
puts:**
3, RCA-type pin jacks
S-Video Input:
1—overrides video 1
input
**Video/Stereo
Audio Output:**
1—selected program,
fixed audio level
**Auxiliary Stereo
Audio Output:**
1, variable-level
**External Speaker Con-
nectors:**
spring-loaded type
**Internal Audio Ampli-
fier Power:**

stereo, 10 watts per
channel

Special Features:
picture-in-picture (with
controls for source,
swap, still/release, loca-
tion and contrast),
channel lock, flesh tint
compensation, video
noise reduction

Absent Features:
tuner output, head-
phone jack

Accessories:
remote control with bat-
teries and antenna
transformer

tube. The set's design lets it fit deep into a corner.

The rear jack set comprises two RF inputs, a loop-through RF output, terminals for external speaker connectors, an internal/external speaker switch, rows of video and stereo audio jacks for line inputs 1, 2 and 3, and selected output with a fixed stereo audio output suitable for recording. There is also a single S-video connector that overrides the video jack for input 1, and a variable-level stereo audio output.

Using one- or two-digit numerical codes, an owner can program the remote control to operate a cable box and a VCR or a laserdisc player in addition to the monitor. To prevent disappointment, check to see if your devices are compatible. A three-position switch on the remote determines which device it controls. The remote sports the usual collection of buttons for TV operation, source selection, antenna switching, audio mode and menus for picture, audio, language and channel programming. Toshiba threw in a few more esoteric controls: timer/clock, and PIP source, swap, still/release, location and on/off.

Operation. From the remote, the monitor is very simple to use. The channel program submenu controls channel programming, add/erase, TV/CATV channel sequence switching, channel lockout (of up to four channels with a four-digit code) and channel captioning. A submenu controls clock set, the off timer, picture preference, reset, noise re-

continued on page 52

RESULTS

Horiz. Resolution: over 600 lines

Snowiness; S/N, Luminance: 54.1 dB

Chroma AM S/N: 53.7 dB

Chroma PM S/N: 51.6 dB

Accuracy of Colors: good/very good

Audio Frequency Response:
line out—20 Hz-20 kHz
+0.2/-0.8 dB; speaker terminals—100 Hz-20

kHz. +0.3/-3 dB, down
19 dB at 20 Hz

Audio S/N:
66.1 dB

Total Harmonic Distortion: 0.9%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
good/very good

Audio Quality:
good/very good

Operational Ease:
good

Overall Performance:
good/very good

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 561

Sony stereo 8mm camcorder

Sony's CCD-TR7 is the first of the TR subcompact line with stereo audio and an 8x zoom. Its AFM stereo is compatible with monaural 8mm VCRs and camcorders because it has a left-plus-right mono track in the usual place between the chroma and luma signals. Placement of the second left-minus-right track is standardized among brands, so the TR7 is also compatible with other 8mm AFM stereo machines.

The 8x zoom lens provides a greater telephoto range than the 6x lens on other TR-series camcorders, which we welcome. But we hope future TRs extend the wide-angle range for better coverage in close quarters.

The TR7 boasts the same wide range of features as the original TR5 ("Video-tests," Sept. '89)—six shutter speeds up to 1/4000-second, auto and manual focus, auto/fixed white balance and hold, a backlight compensator (BLC), a one-page memory superimposer/titler with eight colors and scroll, edit search, a LANC (control L) remote connector and date/time imprinting. However, the TR7's controls are more logically grouped, and a door that covers the manual controls triggers the auto lock switch. This reduces control clutter.

Smallest Stereo:
The TR7 is the tiniest camcorder with AFM stereo audio.

Top Transport: Sony's TR7 uses the same transport mechanism as last year's best-selling TR5.

Sony added new features in addition to stereo, such as a wind noise switch, an audio output selector that lets users listen to stereo or either channel separately, and a second run/stop button under the electronic viewfinder for shooting from a tripod. All these changes were made without increasing weight. And the TR7 comes in at \$100 less than the original price of the TR5.

Description. The TR7 forms a compact block with most controls on the left, much like the TR5. The EVF swings from horizontal to vertical for low-angle shooting. When raised, it exposes the secondary run/stop button and the edit switch. Users must extend the eyepiece before focusing the magnifier.

The large lower bulge at left houses most of the camera section, with the

NOVEMBER 1990 VIDEO 45

lens almost flush with the front of the body. The manual focus ring is exposed, but its scale shows through a covered window. Further back sits the manual zoom lever, the macro range lock at the lever's tip, and the zoom scale.

A sliding cover rides along the side of the bulge. When the cover is open, a user may select shutter speed, focus mode, BLC and white balance mode. The camera bulge also holds buttons for date and time, plus titler buttons for memory, color mode and superimpose on/off. A switch for stereo/1/2 hi-fi sound playback, jacks for LANC remote and headphones, and the battery release hide on the lower part of the body.

On the right side, a strap runs around the user's hand. The thumb falls easily on the standby switch surrounding the main run/stop button at the back, and the fingers curl over the zoom rocker at the top. A window reveals the cassette's supply reel. Jacks for an external microphone, video, DC out and stereo audio occupy the front of the right side. A switch nearby changes the video and audio jacks from inputs to outputs.

A sliding catch releases the right half of the top panel, which swings up-

ward to reveal an eject button. The cassette hatch, which is part of the handgrip, springs up and out for cassette changing.

The left side of the top panel holds the counter, a camera/playback power switch with a safety, a forward/reverse edit search rocker, a spring-loaded slide switch for record and buttons for stop, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, pause, counter reset and zero memory. The wind noise switch also sits on top, between grilles for the stereo mic.

The front of the camera is bare except for the mic grilles, the lens and the fader activator. The rear has grooves for the battery or an adapter, power contacts and loops for the strap. The bottom sports a tripod socket and a compartment for the clock/battery.

Operation. Using the TR7 is straightforward. To insert a cassette, release and raise the flap at the top, then press the eject button. To close the hatch, push the top front corner firmly, but gently, then close the flap. Choose the camera or playback mode with the power switch. Only controls appropriate to the chosen mode become active.

In camera mode, all controls prove

easy to operate. A user need worry about the focus, the shutter speed, the white balance and BLC options only when the auto lock compartment is open. When the door is shut, the camcorder switches to full auto, but remembers the manual settings. This way, the user can call them up simply by opening the compartment.

Like all autofocus systems on consumer camcorders, the TR7's is not perfect. Use the manual mode when the owner's manual recommends. Except for the audio selector, edit switch and input/output selector, all playback controls function like those on the simplest VCRs. The only additional function is that during fast forward or rewind, pressing the fast forward and rewind buttons produces a picture at search speed. Video and audio dubbing are not possible with the TR7, but it makes fairly accurate insert edits with occasional glitches at the out point. Ease of operation is very good to excellent.

Performance. The TR7 has a horizontal resolution of 250 lines with an unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio of 43.5 decibels and a weighted video

continued on page 52

Dual-Deck the halls.

Sony CCD-TR7 8mm Camcorder

DATA	50 IRE	Microphone: stereo electret condenser	head. auto play speed select. still frame, remote pause, separate eject, visible fast forward and rewind, insert edit	Video S/N, Unweighted: 43.5 dB
Suggested Price: \$1,400	Iris: auto with BLC	Jacks: video and stereo audio (switchable—input or output). external mic, remote and headphones		Video S/N, Weighted: 49.8 dB
Weight: 1.7 pounds without battery or cassette	Sensitivity: single range	Tape Format: 8mm		Chroma AM S/N: 42.2 dB
Dimensions: 4-1/4 x 4-3/8 x 7-1/4 inches (h/w/d)	Shutter Speeds: normal (1/60), 1/100, 1/250, 1/1,000, 1/2,000, 1/4000-sec.	Tape Speeds: record—SP; play—SP, LP		Chroma PM S/N: 38.3 dB
Power Requirements: 6-9 VDC	White Balance: auto, switchable to hold, outdoor, indoor	Video Heads: 4		Audio Frequency Response: 20 Hz-12 kHz, +0.1/-3 dB, down 6.8 dB at 20 kHz
Power Consumption: 5.3 W	Viewfinder: EVF with LED recording light and onscreen indicators for BLC, white balance mode, title mode, shutter speed, fader, low battery, dew, autofocus on, macro range, tape transport function, counter, zero memory, no tape and date/time	Cue & Review (Search): 7x		Audio S/N: 71.2 dB
Image Sensor: 1/2-inch CCD	Viewfinder Controls: position, magnifier focus and brightness	Fast Forward/Rewind Time: approx. 8 min. for P6-120 with skip/scan		Audio Distortion: 0.3%
Lens: 1/1.2, 8x (8.5-68 mm) power zoom with macro range	VCR Controls: stop, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, pause, and record	Counter Digits: 5—hrs:mins:secs.		RATINGS
Filter Diameter: 37mm		Program Start Locator/Index/Cue: zero memory		Picture Quality: very good
Minimum Focusing Distance: 4 feet without macro		Hi-Fi AFM Audio: stereo		Audio Quality: very good
Autofocus: TTL, switchable to manual		Special Features: auto fade, flying erase	RESULTS	Operational Ease: very good/excellent
Minimum Illumination: rated—4 lux; measured—6.2 lux for			Horizontal Resolution: 250 lines	Overall Performance: very good/excellent

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VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 562

Canon stereo 8mm camcorder

The EO6 is Canon's entry in the subcompact camcorder sweepstakes. Although it is slightly larger than its competitors, it distinguishes itself by offering stereo audio, remote control and both digital and character-based titles. Canon was the first to offer AFM stereo on an 8mm machine, and continues to offer it on most 8mm camcorders.

This one records stereo signals from its built-in microphone or an external mic, but not from its line input, which is mono. Like mono 8mm audio, 8mm stereo AFM is recorded by the video heads between the luma and the chroma signals. It is impossible to alter the audio without changing the video as well.

The EO6, like other most recent 8mm camcorders, has a date/time imprinter and a digital memory that stores a high-contrast image. This image may



Hand Canon: The small EO6 features fuzzy logic circuits and comes with a remote control (below).

be superimposed on a scene in any of eight colors during taping.

The EO6 also offers a cycle-through character titler capable of two lines of 16 characters each centered about a third of the way up the screen. It may be combined with the time/date at the lower right and the digital memory. Character titles were in vogue a few years ago, but cycling through the whole character set to select each character proved tedious. However, the capability of generating tidy titles as you go remains appealing.

A rotating handgrip contains the electronic viewfinder. Other attractive features include 1/500- and 1/1000-second shutter speeds, auto/lock/fixed white balance, autofocus switchable to manual, a 6x power zoom and extensive onscreen displays. Noticeably absent are manual zoom and focus rings.

The EO6 is fairly simple and lacks some advanced features, but in most cases you will neither need nor miss them. This small camcorder is really limited only by the user's creativity.

Canon EO6 8mm Camcorder

DATA

Suggested Price: \$1,549

Weight: 2.1 pounds without



battery and cassette

Dimensions:
3-7/8 x 3-3/4 x 9-3/4
inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
6 VDC

Power Consumption:
8.1 W

Image Sensor:
1/2-inch CCD

Lens:
f/1.8, 6x (9-54 mm)
power zoom

Filter Diameter:
37mm

**Minimum Focusing
Distance:**
0.6 in. at wide angle,
13 in. at telephoto

Autofocus:
piezo/CCD switchable
to powered manual

Minimum Illumination:
rated—4 lux, mea-
sured—6.8 lux for 50
IRE

Iris: auto

Sensitivity:
single range

Auto Fade:
hold-down type

Shutter:
1/1,000, 1/500-second
and normal (1/60)

White Balance:
automatic with lock

Viewfinder:
EVF with onscreen indi-
cators for focus, focus
zone, white balance,
high speed shutter, digi-
tal title, line recording,
operating mode, tape
counter, tape status,
battery warning, dew,
date/time battery warn-
ing, title, time, date,
timer menu and timer
status

Viewfinder Controls:
magnifier focus and
grip/finder angle

VCR Controls:
play, stop, fast forward/
search, rewind/search
and record run/stop

Microphone:
stereo electret condenser

Jacks:
stereo external mic,
headphones, video in/
out, mono audio in/out,
stereo out and DC out
for RF adapter

Tape Format: 8mm

Tape Speed: SP

Video Heads: 4

**Cue & Review
(Search):**
7x forward, 5x reverse

Fast Forward/Rewind

Time:
8 min. 20 sec. for
P6-120

Remote:
IR wireless with buttons
for start/stop, fade start/
stop, counter reset,
character title, date, re-
wind/search, play, fast
forward/search, stop,
still and zoom rocker

Counter Digits:
5—hrs:mins:secs.

Hi-Fi AFM Audio:
stereo

Special Features:
flying erase head, still
frame, remote pause
(through remote), sepa-
rate eject, insert edit

Absent Features:
frame advance, slow
motion, speed play, vis-
ible fast forward and
rewind, counter memo-
ry, program start
locator/index/cue, audio
dub, video dub, auto
rewind, digital PCM au-
dio

Accessories:
remote control and bat-
teries, battery pack,
lithium clock battery,
charge coupler, com-
pact power adapter, RF
unit, shoulder strap,
stereo cable and A/V
cable

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:
250 lines

**Video S/N, Un-
weighted:**
42.4 dB

Video S/N, Weighted:
49 dB

Chroma AM S/N:
40.3 dB

Chroma PM S/N:
36.8 dB

**Audio Frequency Re-
sponse:**
20 Hz-7 kHz, +0/-3 dB,
down 10.2 dB at 20
kHz

Audio S/N: 73.4 dB

Audio Distortion:
0.4%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
average/good

Audio Quality:
average/good

Operational Ease:
good/very good

Overall Performance:
good

Description. The dark gray EO6 is slightly slimmer and longer than its competitors. Its very useful handgrip rotates 180 degrees, from straight up to straight down, for low- and high-angle shooting. The grip also houses the battery, the run/stop button, the zoom rocker and a release that clicks in at specific angles of rotation.

The top of the camcorder is bare except for the top of the cassette hatch. The hatch pops out on the left side. A column next to the hatch has jacks for external stereo mic, stereo line output, DC out, and video and mono audio. Those last two controls switched from inputs to outputs.

The left side holds most of the basic camera controls, which use various sizes, shapes and textures. These controls change function depending on whether the EO6 is in camera or play mode. They include fade (play), AWB/lock (stop), shutter speed, character title (fast forward/search), date/time (rewind/search), character color, and three digital title controls: memory, color and display. (Button functions in play mode are in parentheses.)

The stereo microphone houses above the lens. Buttons for autofocus on/off and powered manual focus near and far sit below the lens. All remaining controls occupy two columns on the rear panel. Buttons on the right are for power, eject, mode select with LED play and camera indicators, line in/out, and an edit switch. The left column contains buttons for counter reset, the self timer, characters, titles and dates for making entries. During recording, a minus button lets a user see the last few seconds of a previous take.

The remote control includes a zoom rocker and buttons for record start/stop, counter reset, characters, title, date, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, stop, still and fade start/stop. The latter control delivers a fully automatic fade.

Operation. The size and shape of the EO6 are comfortable, and the adjustable grip makes it easy to get unusual shots, like over the top of a crowd. The basic shooting controls are relatively large, distinguishable by touch and logically organized. The only regularly used camera controls on the rear panel are for record review and composing character titles. To use the titling options, just switch on the ones you need.

We have a few reservations about the EO6's camera functions, specifically its lack of a manual zoom, its powered manual focus, which is trickier to adjust than the normal lens ring, and the hold-down type fade, although the automatic one on the remote can be used in certain cases. Edit search would also have

been nice to have. In play mode, the doubled-up playback controls on the camera are a little awkward, but those on the remote are really convenient. Ease of operation is good to very good.

Performance. The EO6 delivers 250 lines of horizontal resolution with an unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio of 42.4 decibels, and a weighted video S/N of 49 dB. The chroma AM S/N is 40.3 dB while the chroma PM S/N is 36.8 dB. The camera is rated at 4-lux sensitivity, and requires 6.8 lux for an output of 50 IRE units. Picture quality is average to good.

The audio frequency response of the camcorder is 20 hertz to 7 kilohertz, +0/-3 dB, down 10.2 dB at 20 kHz, with an audio S/N of 73.4 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 0.4 percent. Stereo separation measured through the external mic input is 63.2 dB. Audio quality is average to good.

Conclusion. The Canon EO6 is a very friendly subcompact 8mm camcorder. It's a bit larger than competitors, but includes a rotating grip that's really useful. Picture and sound quality are average to good and ease of operation is good to very good. Overall performance is good. At a suggested price of \$1,549, it is certainly worth consideration. It may just fit your needs and shooting style. ■

TECH TIPS

Focus hocus pocus

When shooting a scene from across a room, or in any other situation where someone or something might come between you and your subject, set the camcorder's focus control to manual once it's in focus. This eliminates focusing errors and the blurry images triggered by something moving between you and your subject.

Mike Steiner
Fremont, Nebraska

Calling all tipsters

Do you know something we don't about VCRs, TVs, camcorders and other home video equipment? We'll share it with our readers if you share it with us as a "Tech Tip." We'll also give you credit and a \$25 bounty for each tip we publish. Tips should be informative and to the point. Please include your name, address and phone number—and a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish your submission returned. Send submissions to Tech Tips, *Video Magazine*, 460 West 34 St., New York, NY 10001.

MAKE YOUR NEXT VIDEO MORE MOVING.



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In the middle of a music video a sudden series of stills heightens the experience. Now you can interrupt your videos with stills—from the Canon Xap Shot. (Edit in special effects as well.) The Xap Shot makes advanced high-band still video photography easy. It records 50 shots on a 2-inch floppy disk. And with auto exposure, auto flash, auto white balance and a self-timer, it's completely automatic. Plus, it's now easier to afford. So what's stopping you from creatively stopping your videos?

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VIDEOTESTS



VIDEOTEST NUMBER 563

Sony combi player

Sony's MDP-333 is a modestly priced combination laser player with a wide range of features for its price class. A standout on both the player and the remote is the Dual Scan Mode Shuttle Control, which looks like the jog/shuttle controls of more expensive models, but delivers two scan speeds. Usually there is some picture distortion during scan on CLV discs, but in this player, Sony figured out how to keep a clear scan picture without using digital circuitry. The central portion of the control on the player is not a jog dial, but a convenient

play button. The remote has a conventional play button.

Speed play buttons deliver the usual bi-directional variable speed CAV range from 1/90x to 3x, plus 5x and 10x options with CAV discs. The S-video output, usually found only on expensive models, improves picture quality.

The MDP-333 also boasts upscale audio features like dual digital-to-analog converters and a digital optical output for feeding amplifiers that accept optical signals. For added convenience there's intro scan, which plays the first eight seconds of each chapter or track; programmable playback sequencing of chapters or tracks; shuffle (random) play; auto program, which selects the playback of chapters or tracks that fit

Sony MDP-333 Combi Player

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$650

Weight:
16.75 pounds

Dimensions:
4-1/2 x 17 x 17 inches
(h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
40 W

Disc Formats:

3-inch CD single, 5-inch CD and CD-video, 8-inch LD and LD single, and 12-inch LD

Disc Speeds:

CD, CLV, CAV

Play Speed Select:

automatic

Still Frame:

CAV discs only

Frame Advance:

forward and reverse, CAV discs only

Variable Speed

Motion:

forward or reverse for CAV discs—10x, 5x, 3x, 2x, 1x, 1/2x, 1/4x, 1/8x, 1/16x, 1/30x (1 frame/sec.), 1/90x (1 frame/3 sec.)

Cue & Review (Search):

10x and 30x

Remote Control:

IR wireless with shuttle ring and buttons for open/close, disc/TV, display, program, frame/time, clear, repeat, CX, 1/A to F/6, 7 to 0, +10, search next, repeat, 1/all, shuffle play, repeat A-B, back, analog/digital audio, audio monitor St/L/R, A, pause/A, space, AV time, auto program, file, custom index, multi speed forward and reverse, speed set minus and plus, still/step reverse and forward, custom index reverse and forward, automatic chapter/music (skip) reverse and forward, intro (search), stop, pause and play; plus volume up and down, channel up and down, TV/video

and power for Sony TVs with "R" mark

Separate Eject:

open/close

Counter Digits:

CAV—5-digit frame counter: CLV and CD—5-digit hrs:mins:secs. counter: chapter/track—2-digit plus 20-digit AV calendar

Counter Memory:

6—custom index

Program Start Locator/Index/Cue:

counter/time, chapter/track, point A/B, indexes

Digital Audio:

stereo or dual mono

AMF Audio:

stereo or dual mono

Accessories:

remote control with batteries, video cable, stereo audio cable, channel 3/4 RF adapter cable and spacer

channel 3/4 RF adapter cable and spacer

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:

425 lines

Luminance S/N, Unweighted:

48 dB

Luminance S/N, Weighted:

54.5 dB

Video S/N, Unweighted:

47.2 dB

Video S/N, Weighted:

54.1 dB

Chroma AM S/N:

49.4 dB

Chroma PM S/N:

40.5 dB

Audio Frequency Response:

digital—10 Hz-20 kHz, +0.4/-0.7 dB; analog

Clearer CLV:

The Clear Scan feature on Sony's MDP-333 provides clear forward and reverse pictures on CLV laserdisks.



within a designated time; and audio/visual (A/V) calendar, which shows the number of tracks on a disc and the total playing time, and accepts up to six user-selected index marks for playback conveniences.

Description. The MDP-333 is titanium gray with touches of black, white and gold. The upper part of the front covers the powered disc drawer. The lower half contains any infrared sensor, the headphone jack and its volume control, and buttons for power and repeat.

A large display sits beneath the disc hatch. At its right sit a ten-digit keypad and buttons for +10, auto program, A/V time, file and custom index.

The shuttle ring spans both halves of the panel. Nearby sit an open/close button for the disc drawer, and buttons for pause, stop, chapter/track reverse and chapter/track forward. The play button occupies the center of the shuttle ring. Sony uses a similar arrangement on many of its VCRs, and it has proven a most convenient way to search and return to play.

The rear is very simple. There's the power cord, an optical digital audio output, standard stereo audio output and S-video output. Another group contains output for video, mono audio and DC power. That last jack powers an RF adapter similar to the ones Sony supplies with 8mm camcorders. This arrangement isolates unwanted RF pollution from the base band video signal. Most combi player owners use video and stereo audio outputs, so the RF adapter presents no problem.

The remote control is a bit crowded, but an intelligent layout eases operation. The shuttle dial sits nearest the user. A silver background contains frequently used buttons: play, stop, pause, chapter/track forward and reverse, index forward and reverse, and intro scan. The remaining buttons include controls for open/close, disc/TV, the onscreen display, the keypad, search, repeat, shuffle (random), audio output selectors, variable speed/step, and auto program/file/custom index, as well as basic controls for Sony TV sets.

Operation. Setting up the player is really easy. Sony even provides a spacer sheet to level the player. If you use a conventional TV set, the RF adapter, complete with channel 3/4 switch, is built into the cable.

All the basic controls are on the right side of the player or at the back third of the remote. The user can set six custom indexes using the first six buttons of the ten-digit keypad, along with the A/V-time auto program, file (store), and custom index activator buttons. Another button repeats the entire side of the disc.

The remote performs complex tricks like multiple-speed play, analog/digital switching for LV audio, left/right/stereo switching for multilingual discs, A-B/side/chapter repeat, search and intro search. Using these features is easy once you know they are there. The manual has good diagrams and excellent cross references. The legends on the remote could use more contrast for readability in poor light, but the basic controls are easy to locate by touch. Operational

ease is very good to excellent.

Performance. The MDP-333 delivers a horizontal resolution of 425 lines with an unweighted luminance signal-to-noise ratio of 48 decibels and a video S/N of 47.2 dB. The weighted luminance S/N is 54.5 dB and the weighted video S/N 54.1 dB. The chroma AM S/N is 49.4 dB and the chroma PM S/N is 40.5 dB. Before Pioneer's \$3,500 LD-S2 came out, the MDP-333's picture quality would have earned an unqualified excellent, but given the standard set by the LD-S2, this player falls in the next group — very good/excellent.

The digital audio frequency response is 10 hertz to 20 kilohertz, +0.4/-0.7 dB, with an audio S/N over 103 dB (our measurement limit) and a dynamic range of 99 dB. The total harmonic distortion, rated at 0.002 percent, measures better than 0.02 percent, our measurement limit. The frequency response for analog FM audio material is 40 Hz to 20 kHz, +/-3 dB, down 8.3 dB at 20 Hz with an S/N of 72.3 dB and a measured total harmonic distortion of 0.09 percent. Audio quality for digital material is excellent, but for analog material it is only good/very good because of weak low-frequency response.

Conclusion. The MDP-333's performance and features belie its modest suggested price of \$650. Its picture quality is very good to excellent, with special praise for the distortion-free scan. The digital audio quality is excellent, and its analog audio is rated good/very good because of weak frequency response. Ease of operation is very good to excellent. Its overall rating is very good to excellent. It is a good value that we recommend highly. ■

TECH TIP

Tying up loose ends

When dubbing from an audio cassette deck onto videotape, I often want the last notes of a piece of music to fall exactly at the end of a video segment. This can be tough to do, because few audio cassette decks have real-time counters, but there's a simple solution. If you're dubbing in 90 seconds of music, play the cassette through to the end of the music segment, stop it, flip the cassette, and play it for 90 seconds. Now flip the tape again. There will be exactly 90 seconds of audio to match the end of a 90-second video segment perfectly.

Larry Gorney
Simi Valley, California

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FREEZE IT.



Shoot everyone with the Canon Xap Shot. Then, while the party's still going, everyone can gather 'round and see the results on TV—big and immediate. Look: here's a guest endangering an heirloom chair. Look: here's a guest flirting with the hostess. All captured on freeze-frames—no film, no developing. And it's the only camera of its kind that connects to a TV without a playback adapter. Now that it's easier to afford, there's no reason to be left out in the cold.

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TOSHIBA TV

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duction and PIP contrast. The language menu gives a choice of English, French and Spanish onscreen captions.

The PIP options are familiar, but some may wish for a second tuner for watching two channels rather than one video source and one TV channel. The

three-level menu system is a bit tedious. Ease of operation is good.

Performance. The CF3264K is rated at 700 lines of horizontal resolution, which we verified to over 600 lines. Its video signal-to-noise ratio is 54.1 decibels, while its chroma AM S/N is 53.7 dB and its chroma PM S/N is 51.6 dB with the noise reduction off. These signal-to-noise ratios are a bit below what we usually measure. Some signs of

interference are visible in full solid-color screens, but are masked by a normal-looking picture.

Accuracy of color is good to very good with better results on strong color than on fleshtones, which show a slight magenta tone. The fleshtone enhancer creates more natural skin tones but turns greens yellowish and gives the entire picture a golden shade. It can be a pleasing effect, but since color is a matter of taste, you should evaluate it yourself. Picture quality is good to very good.

The audio frequency response at the fixed-level line output is 20 hertz to 20 kilohertz, +0.2/-0.8 dB. At the external speaker terminals frequency response is 100 Hz to 20 kHz, +0.3/-3 dB, down 19 dB at 20 Hz. The internal speakers provide little usable frequency response below 100 Hz or over 15 kHz. The audio S/N is 66.1 dB with a total harmonic distortion of 0.9 percent. Audio quality is good to very good.

Conclusion. The CF3264K is a handsome 32-inch monitor/receiver with a fair share of advanced features. Picture and audio quality are both good to very good, and we rate ease of operation good because the multiple menus are simple (if a bit tedious). Overall performance is good to very good. It may be just the large-screen monitor you're looking for, so it is well worth considering. Its suggested price is \$1,999. ■

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- Provides overcharge protection for battery.

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TC200-12PS AC/DC Charger/Reconditioner for 12V Panasonic/RCA-Type...	Sug. Retail	\$129.95
TC200-6 DC Only (for 6V Sony and Canon-Type)		\$99.95
TC200-12 DC Only (for 12V Panasonic/RCA-Type)		\$99.95



Turbo Camcharger not only charges but also reconditions batteries to eliminate the memory build-up that occurs in NiCd batteries used by camcorders. "Memory build-up" prevents your battery from receiving a full charge, causing it to go dead in a short period of time. By using Turbo Camcharger, you will increase the life of your batteries. It's that simple.

Turbo Camcharger also offers the convenience of AC/DC operation so you can use it away from home.

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SONY CAMCORDER

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S/N of 49.8 dB. The chroma AM S/N is 42.2 dB and the chroma PM S/N is 38.3 dB. All these measurements except chroma PM S/N are higher than for the TR5, and highly competitive with other new subcompact camcorders. Its sensitivity is rated at 4 lux, and we measured it at 6.2 lux for 50 IRE units. Picture quality is very good for 8mm.

The audio frequency response is 20 hertz to 12 kilohertz, +0.1/-3 dB, down 6.8 dB at 20 kHz. The audio S/N is 71.2 dB and total harmonic distortion is 0.3 percent. Stereo separation from line sources is over 67 dB. Audio quality is very good.

Conclusion. The Sony CCD-TR7 has two big advantages over the TR5: a longer zoom and stereo audio. It improves on almost all the TR5's picture performance measurements, for a rating of very good. Only slight compromises are made in delivering stereo, so audio quality is also very good. Ease of operation is very good to excellent as is its overall performance. At its suggested price of \$1,400, it is a very good value that we recommend highly. ■

MONEY'S WORTH

continued from page 24

the accessories, either. If a camcorder's battery is charged, but the seller doesn't have the AC adapter, steer clear."

Woodcock offers further advice for buying from classifieds: "A lot of ads say that the equipment is 'professional' when it really isn't. And beware of industrial decks. Some people think industrial means higher quality, but many of these decks have been used as slaves in duplicating houses, running 24 hours a day, so they're completely worn out. And never pay the price they're asking. You can usually talk them down — just start walking out the door and see what happens."

But no matter how many precautions a buyer takes, no matter how new the equipment appears, no matter how little it costs, and no matter how big the used video business becomes, used equipment is still a compromise. And when you consider the work it takes to find good used video gear, the risks involved, and the often minimal price advantages, it's probably a compromise few videophiles will want to make. ■

TECH TIPS

Audio dub sub

If you want to dub narration onto a tape but can't find a microphone, a set of personal stereo headphones makes a good substitute. Just plug the headphones into the mic jack — the headphone speakers will work as microphones. Because the mic jack is monophonic, only one of the speakers will be connected, so be sure to speak into both of them.

Manfred Lopez
Westmont, Illinois

Faking a fade

Many recent camcorders fade to white, instead of black. However, a fade to black is sometimes more dramatic. If your camcorder has a manual iris, you should be able to simulate a fade to black. When you're ready to fade, put the camcorder in manual iris mode, and slowly close the iris all the way. To bring a scene up from black, close the iris, then slowly open it until you reach the correct exposure.

Norman E. Oliver
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Think before you shoot

Keep future editing sessions in mind as you shoot video: Let the tape run for a few seconds before and after each shot. This extra footage gives you room to choose just the right starting and ending frames, and will compensate for the inherent inaccuracies of most consumer editing equipment. It also assures that the tape will be up to speed by the time you frame a shot.

Sandy Angel D. Tabar Jr.
Cebu City, Philippines

New math

I've found a simpler method than the one Doug Bowers described ("Tech Tips," July '90) to maximize SP recording time for programs longer than two hours. Subtract the recording tape's length in minutes (120 for a T-120 VHS tape) from the program time. Divide this number by two. Subtract the result from the recording tape's length to get the time to spend in SP.

John Louch
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Stroller dolly

Babies are one of the big reasons people buy camcorders. Luckily, a stroller makes a good accessory for both. Simply secure a tripod to the stroller with bungee cords, and you have a versatile rolling shooting platform. Mario Massens

Fallbrook, California

Quick-draw power

Carrying extra camcorder batteries around can be cumbersome, but when you're planning to shoot for a whole day, you don't have much choice. Instead of filling your pockets, though, stuff the batteries inside Radio Shack's wireless telephone holster (stock number 43-190). It's much more comfortable, and costs less than \$5.

Gene McFarland
Charleston, Illinois

Reliable rewinding

To minimize tape wear, and the possibility of snapping a videotape's leader when rewinding, reset the VCR's counter to zero after playing a tape for a few seconds. After viewing the tape, use the VCR's memory rewind or go-to-zero function. This will rewind the tape and stop it just before the end.

Ben Martnick
Wind Gap, Pennsylvania

MAKE YOUR NEXT SET OF SLIDES MORE EXCITING.



TOSS 'EM.



While an invitation to view slides can make eyelids droop, people like to watch TV. So instead of slides, shoot everything with the Canon Xap Shot — that plays back on your TV. If a shot's a dud, simply erase and record right over it on the floppy disk. And you can store more than 5000 images in a space smaller than a shoe box. Plus, now the Xap Shot is easier to afford. Check out the prices; they're eye-openers. For more information, call 1-800-221-3333, ext. 706.

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UNCHARTED WATERS: A SPECIAL SECTION

It's Year One of the '90s, but the first buzzword of the decade—multimedia—is already established. It's a catchy term, broad enough to be encountered on MTV, in art and dance circles, and in elementary schools. In video, multimedia currently refers to a powerful, interdisciplinary way of producing videotapes.

Multimedia video-makers are learning to harness the vast potential of personal computers—partly to streamline the editing process, and partly to supplement camcorder images with the sizzle of animation, bright graphics, clever special effects and varied audio enhancements. For hands-on videophiles, multimedia literacy may soon become as important as high-definition TV or the advent of true digital video.

In this special section, we'll take a

close look at the emerging phenomenon. "Multimedia: Video's Newest Wave" by Associate Editor Brent Butterworth defines what multimedia means for videophiles and explains how to bring multimedia's magic into your own post-production work. In "3 Amigas," freelance writer Jim McBride describes how a trio of multimedia adventurers created personalized video systems to take their productions to new heights. And in "Ultimedia," Contributing Editor Bob Barlow sneaks a peek at a professional multimedia editing suite that manipulates video segments as easily as word processors cut and paste sentences.

We think this special section will give you a good idea of what multimedia is about, and how you can put it to use.



MULTIMEDIA

Add zing to your tapes with interactive

Imagine traveling in a country whose language you can only simply speak. Newspaper headlines are accessible, but not their stories. You can order from restaurant menus, but avoid daily specials the waiters recite. You can ask for directions, but not always follow them when given.

One day, you become aware of a group of tools that can give you the powers of literacy: phrase books, translation services, native guides, English-language maps and the like. Using them, your fluency accelerates. Newspapers yield their nuances, restaurants their specialties, locales their secret places. Your status too changes, as your eye becomes more knowing.

This is what it feels like to go from making videos with a camcorder and a VCR to making them with a full-bodied

multimedia system. To trade in hand-drawn title cards for a computer with animation powers and a few essential peripherals. Once mastered, multimedia becomes a new and essential language of video—a language which, through use, confers the power to describe experiences more precisely, more entertainingly than ever before.

Video makers, from professionals and would-be professionals to ordinary enthusiasts, are embarking on a new adventure—the exploration of a multimedia frontier populated by new interactive formats emerging from such companies as Philips and Sony, and by familiar VCRs and camcorders supplemented with a wonderland of computer devices. We're going to look at what multimedia really means as it applies to video, and how you can begin using it.

Choosing Macs And IBMs

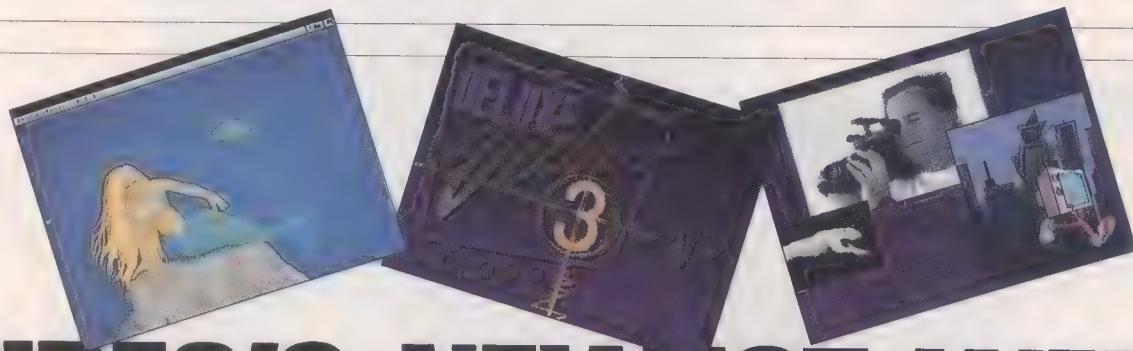
Videophiles in search of multimedia powers lean strongly toward Commodore's low-priced, graphics-oriented Amiga computers. But plenty of home video makers already have IBM PCs or Apple Macintoshes. And they're in no hurry to cough up yet more for Amigas. Happily, they may not have to. A new generation of IBM- and Mac-compatible hardware and software is bringing video-oriented work within the reach of many more people.

What kind of video work can you do with that IBM sitting on your desk? If you have Truevision's Targa board, you can create graphics as good as those used in network news and sports programs, as well as major national commercials. Targa boards are used so widely by professionals that the name is in danger of becoming a generic term for IBM video encoders.

All Targas fit into expansion slots on IBM ATs, PS/2s and clones. At \$1,800 for the 16-megahertz version, the new Targa + is the lowest-priced Targa yet. It genlocks computer graphics to incoming video signals, grabs frames from the video for use in animations and graphics, performs chroma keying (the process used to put computer-generated weather maps behind TV weathermen) and provides a broadcast-quality S-video or composite output signal.

The Targa + generates up to 33,000 colors, com-

Colors and Crops:
The screens above
were created using a
Commodore Amiga with
Electronic Arts' *Deluxe
Paint III* and *Deluxe
Video III*.



VIDEO'S NEWEST WAVE

systems that mix moving images, audio, graphics & effects.

Our starting point is the computer, since it is from computers that video multimedia most immediately borrows its lexicon. And capabilities. Even those experts who hesitate to precisely define "multimedia" concur that it represents a merging of the video and computer fields. "All video equipment is controlled by microprocessors," explains Keith Nealy, who has created multimedia videos for dozens of Fortune 500 companies.

"A few years ago, computer companies realized their products could also control video signals and devices by mimicking what dedicated computers were already doing in professional video. And they adopted the term 'multimedia' to describe this process."

Professional video producers have dabbled in multimedia for years. You can

see the results on almost any news or sports program, where computer-generated graphics show statistics, introduce show segments and sometimes just add slick touches. Multimedia has also had an impact on educational and corporate video presentations, two fields in which complex data must be passed along in ways that do not put audiences to sleep.

Nolan Bushnell, the founder of Atari, agrees with Nealy. Bushnell is now guiding the development of Commodore's CDTV interactive disc format. "Multimedia is the process of adding all the things you can do with a computer—the graphics, the sound, the interactive control—to video," he says. "It will give many more people the ability to create presentations and games. For example, teachers will be able to produce educational programs that incorporate

pared to 16 for the Amiga. These extra colors are essential if you're planning to create realistic graphics instead of cartoon-like ones. In fact, some Amiga users even connect Targas to their systems, using IBM bridge boards. Truevision also has created a simpler, \$1,000 alternative to the Targa called the True VGA, which lacks the Targa's frame grabbing and chroma key capabilities.

If \$1,000 sounds too steep, Progressive Image Technology's Video Charley may be your answer. It's a \$550 board that attaches to a \$100 EGA graphics card. The Video Charley serves as a genlock and NTSC encoder. It produces 16 colors at once from a palette of 64. Software included with the board creates titles in three typefaces and several sizes, and scrolls or wipes titles onto the screen. Video Charley also supports any EGA-compatible graphics software. You can see the results on Financial News Network—the stock prices scrolling under the video come from a Video Charley.

The Apple Macintosh produces a video signal far from the NTSC standard, so Mac owners don't fare as well as IBM users. There are three Mac multimedia boards to choose among, all of which fit any Mac II. Truevision's \$3,000 NuVista+ gives Mac II users the awesome power of a Targa board, plus an additional megabyte of memory. Radius' TV board does about the

video, graphics, text and audio, using equipment that costs \$5,000 instead of \$1 million."

Unlike other multimedia sages, Bushnell feels that it isn't multimedia if it isn't interactive. "You've got to have the machine making some decisions for you, and you have to make some decisions for the machine," he explains. "Something has to be under user control—otherwise it's just media, not multimedia. A home video producer experiences multimedia, but his audience is only watching the product of multimedia."

The dedicated multimedia hardware Bushnell envisions won't be available until CDTV hits the market late this year, and the first decks using Philips' CD-Interactive format are probably a year away. Many schools can use multi-

same thing for about the same price. RasterOps' \$2,000 ColorBoard 364 only handles video input, but an output converter should soon be available for a few hundred dollars.

Most IBM and Mac multimedia software costs considerably more than Amiga programs. But as the field expands, the prices contract. Autodesk *Animator*, a \$400 IBM program introduced last fall, has won plenty of followers with professional-quality paint and animation effects. The latest and least-expensive IBM paint program is Electronic Arts' \$135 *Deluxe Paint Animation*, which performs many of the stunts that made the company's *Deluxe Paint III* the unofficial Amiga standard.

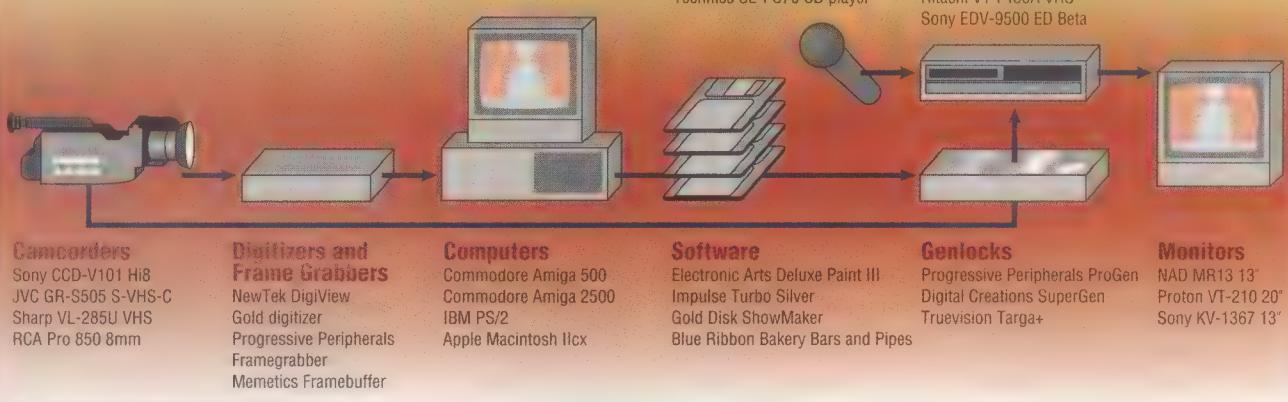
Mac users pay a premium not only for hardware, but for software. For low-buck Mac multimedia, there's Data Translation's \$400 *Video Quill*, which produces titles and graphics. For full-blown productions, MacroMind's \$800 *Director* creates and combines graphics, text and animation, and synchronizes the result with external sound and video sources.

If all these prices seem out of reach, don't worry. Industry insiders expect multimedia to emerge as the next big opportunity for computer companies, and as research and development intensify, prices for multimedia necessities should fall considerably.

—BB

Multimedia Basics

A Sampler for Getting Started



media programs thanks to computer-controlled industrial laserdisc players, but for now, most multimedia laserdiscs are intended for educational use. Consumers who want to get into multimedia have only one choice: connecting their home video gear to a personal computer.

Most computers used for personal multimedia projects come from Commodore, the company that first promoted the idea. Although Commodore's Amiga computers were originally designed for games, they also proved useful in video production, thanks largely to NTSC-compatible RGB outputs. Any Amiga can be connected to a TV set or a VCR using a \$50 encoder. IBM and Apple computers still need special video boards costing from \$500 to \$3,000 (see sidebar for more about IBM and Apple computers).

Another big plus for Amigas is their multitasking capability, which lets them perform two operations at once. This allows multimedia makers to create an animation with one program, while setting it to music with another.

Because Commodore has a big head start on the competition, many more multimedia programs and peripherals have been created for the Amiga than for IBMs and Apples. And for home producers whose budgets are already stretched by expensive video gear, the Amiga's relatively low price often comes as a welcome surprise. But don't count the big boys out—IBM has joined forces again with Microsoft, a driving force in

Multimedia is more than just flashy effects. It's a whole new way to communicate.

innovative software, to establish a new set of multimedia standards.

The accompanying diagram shows the essential elements of a video-oriented multimedia system, and how anyone with a home video setup—a camcorder, a VCR and a TV monitor—can create multimedia videos by adding a computer and a few peripherals. Most multimedia projects start with video footage shot with a camcorder. Video from the camcorder (or other signal source like a VCR or a laserdisc player) travels to a genlock device, which synchronizes and mixes the video signals from the computer and the camcorder so that computer graphics can be superimposed over live video.

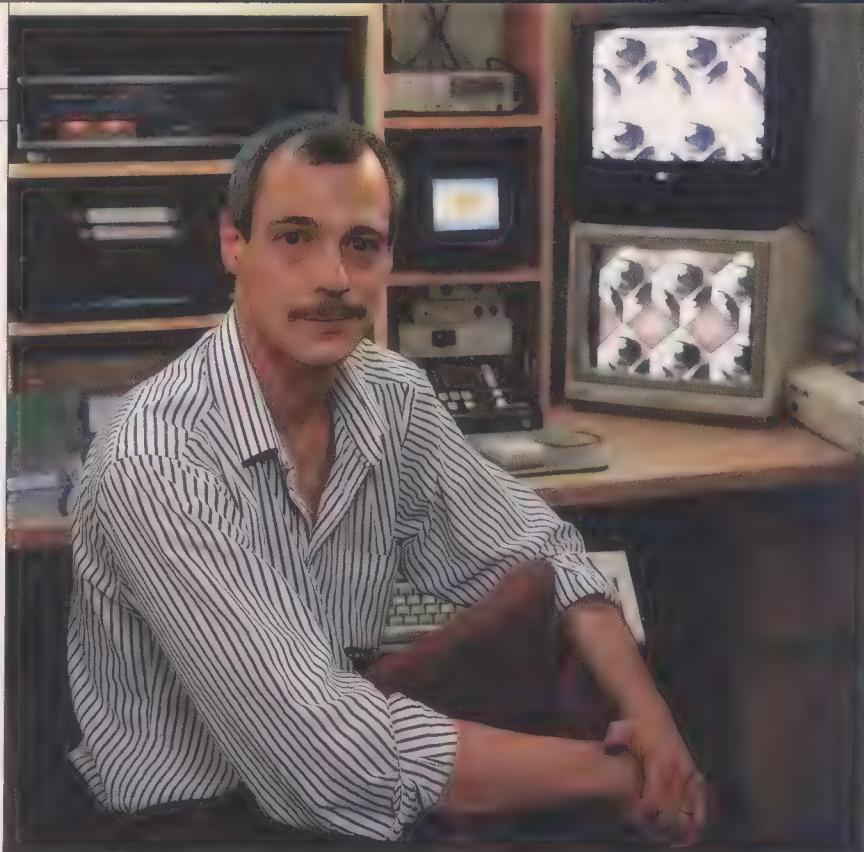
The camcorder can also feed a digitizer or a frame grabber, both of which convert individual frames of video into computer images that can be altered using graphics software.

For final editing, video from the gen-

lock device feeds a VCR and a monitor. The audio can come from the same sources normally used in home video: the original camcorder tape, a narration microphone or an audio tape deck. For greater multimedia impact, a better bet is to generate sound with the computer. Almost any computer can control a musical synthesizer equipped with a musical instrument digital interface (MIDI) port. Amigas come with onboard four-channel sound synthesizers.

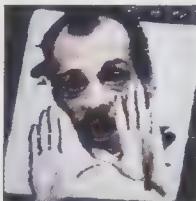
Why assemble such a complicated setup just to add pizzazz to a few home tapes? Because multimedia is a lot more than flashy effects. It's a new way of communicating. "The more media you add, the more it can affect people," observes Arthur Asa Barber, professor of broadcast communications at San Francisco State University and author of 18 books on media and pop culture. "For example, seeing and hearing is more powerful than just seeing. As you increase the number of media, you intensify the effect on the brain." However, Barber warns it's not enough to rely on new multimedia toys as substitutes for quality and imagination. "You can develop new technology, but if you use it to create the same old junk, you've accomplished nothing," he says.

Multimedia makers predict a bright future for their chosen form of expression. "Multimedia will change everything," Nealy enthuses. "Everyone who uses communications—and who doesn't?—will be touched by this."



3 AMIGAS

How a trio of savvy buffs developed their own multimedia video systems.



When multimedia is the question, its practitioners are the answer. The systems and the projects of the people who are creating multimedia videotapes show how this style is starting to have an impact. To better understand its potential, we talked to a trio of multimedia pioneers. Their work ranges from sophisticated corporate videos to playful family tapes. Yet, while their equipment and ambitions vary as well, they all share a belief that multimedia is adding a new, important dimension to their work with video.

All three create videos that marry video, audio and computer graphics into compelling compositions. All three acquired their multimedia skills through a trial-and-error learning process. And, since they all face familiar budgetary restraints, they also all rely on Commodore's reasonably priced Amiga line for computing power.

The concept of multimedia originated in artistic circles, where it referred to the marriage of several media—text, graphic arts, video, audio and special effects—in the context of a single piece of work. But within the last five years, it spread to the computer field, then into video, where it is generally understood to apply to full-motion videos that include audio, graphics, animation and special effects, usually with the help of computers.

Professionals have long had access to powerful multimedia systems—the slick segments that introduce most nightly news

Post Office:
In his modest post-production suite, Tony Impoco animates computer images (like the face at left and the brush below), lays them over video images and adds computer-generated sound for complete multimedia productions.



BY JAMES McBRIDE

3 AMIGAS

programs are a familiar example. But as the cost of computing comes down—and as more homes possess VCRs, camcorders and personal computers as a matter of course—the promise of multimedia is coming rapidly within the reach of video enthusiasts. Here's a look at how three multimedia pioneers are handling the challenge, and the directions they're headed in.

EDITING WITHOUT TAPE

Multimedia is still a new concept even among professional videographers, so many add multimedia capabilities to conventional video production setups as an afterthought. However, Martin Ricketts, president of Gibric Video Systems of London, Ontario, designed his editing suite for multimedia production from start.

But what really gives Ricketts' system a unique twist is his chosen video medium. He has spurned the relatively imprecise, unwieldy mechanisms of VCRs in favor of a Panasonic write-once recordable laserdisc deck. He controls the deck with a souped-up Amiga, which he also uses to add graphics and sound to the images on the disc.

Ricketts has used computers in his video work since 1982, when he programmed Canadian cable advertising channels using IBM computers. He switched to Amigas when he discovered they could do the job better and cheaper.



er. Early Amiga users, like Ricketts, had little video software to choose from, but as the number of programs and peripherals exploded, so did the complexity of Ricketts' work. He even took on an animation staff, Paul Safr, Eric Fleischer and Kathy Chinnick.

His reel now includes corporate videos brimming with animated logos and graphics, promotional tapes pulsing with computer-sequenced synthesizer soundtracks, and art-for-art's-sake animations that rival award-winning work produced using much more expensive equipment.

To meet the demands of video work, Ricketts boosted an Amiga 2000 with an expander board that cranks the machine up to over 12 times its normal speed. "The basic 2000 really isn't fast enough to do advanced multimedia tasks because so many things happen at once," says Ricketts. An unmodified 2000 can take hours, even days, to render complex three-dimensional objects. The accelerator cuts the time substantially, while adding the power of its own 80-

megabyte hard drive and four megabytes of memory.

Ricketts' 2000 also includes a bridge board that lets it run programs written for IBM PCs, and an ASDG controller card that communicates with the laserdisc recorder. A SuperGen 2000S S-video compatible genlock by Digital Creations and a Memetics Frame Buffer, which grabs images from videotape, round out the system.

Ricketts chose the laserdisc recorder both for its picture quality and its fast access time. He shoots video straight from a broadcast-quality JVC video camera onto the disc. Using Gold Disk's *ShowMaker*, a \$400 program designed especially for multimedia editing, he can immediately call up video segments from the laserdisc, combine them with graphics and music produced with other programs, and output the entire program to tape.

In fact, Ricketts uses videotape only for his final product. *ShowMaker* can exactly reproduce an entire multimedia



Northern Lights:
In his Ontario studio,
Martin Ricketts and
crew blend dazzling
graphics, like the anima-
tion at left, with
video images from a la-
serdisc recorder.

program over and over again. This way, tapes meant for distribution carry second-generation video. Conventional video editing produces a second-generation master tape, which is then dubbed for distribution, adding a generation and degrading picture quality.

A laserdisc recorder, which usually costs about \$12,000, may seem like a high-priced, esoteric option suited only for multimedia magnates but, surprisingly, Ricketts bought his deck used for \$8,000—only about twice the price of a top pro VCR. And well-heeled videophiles can still get in on the deal. "The deck has recently been discontinued, but you can still pick one up for about \$8,500," says Ricketts.

Ricketts adds high-tech harmonies with Rhodes and Roland MIDI modules, which cost about \$1,000 each. He sequences the music using Blue Ribbon Bakery's \$250 *Bars and Pipes* program. "Bars and Pipes is great because it lets you go back and change the music in real time," he explains. "You can also use it to control the Amiga's internal sound synthesizer chips."

Although multimedia has expanded the scope of his work, Ricketts worries that many people think of the concept as a panacea for problems inherent in video production. "There is no substitute for good video and editing," he says. "The better grasp you have of the basics, the easier it is in the long run. People need to remember that they are still working with a video signal—and no amount of fancy electronics is going to change that."

WINNING WEDDINGS

Like other videographers, Tony Impoco of Springfield, Massachusetts, enjoys the creative potential of multimedia. But to Impoco, multimedia



Home Cropping Network: Carol Hauk's computer setup turns digitized photos into multimedia videos.

also means money. His Amiga's dazzling graphics have played a big part in the success of his event videography business.

Until multimedia came along, he earned extra bucks on the side by shooting weddings and special events. He admits his early work left something to be desired. "I was an amateur, and I knew I wasn't giving it my best," he recalls.

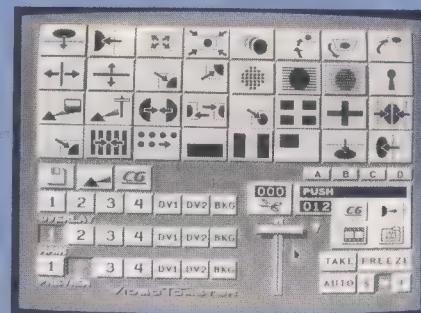
In 1985, Impoco answered an ad for

Video's Toasty New Treat

Most top video professionals shun Amigas, opting instead for the superior speed and power of Sun workstations, IBM PCs and Apple Macintoshes. But at this summer's National Association of Broadcasters show, a new Amiga graphics board called the Video Toaster left them salivating. It also suggests that pro-quality multimedia devices may trickle down to consumer-level budgets sooner than anyone expected.

The Toaster's birthplace—NewTek, a small Topeka, Kansas, company—is as unlikely as its name, but both caught the blossoming multimedia industry off guard, thanks to the Toaster's astonishing capabilities. It combines a video switcher with hundreds of scene-transition options, a 25-font character generator, a genlock, digital video effects, a frame grabber, a linear keyer (which overlays one video source onto another) and dual frame buffers, which permit three-dimensional rendering. The Toaster includes software for titling, 3-D graphics and animation. The Amiga's mouse controls these functions through an onscreen display.

The Toaster meets Federal Communications Commission standards for broadcast video, a rare feat for Amiga hardware. Add a couple of professional VCRs, and you can use the Toaster to assemble an editing suite that might hold its own with pro gear costing tens of thousands of dollars.



Hot Toast:
Through this onscreen display, the Video Toaster performs professional-looking scene transitions and special effects.

How much does the Video Toaster cost? Sit down. Take a deep breath. It's \$1,595.

Don't reach for your checkbook yet. At presstime, NewTek still had a few crumbs to shake out of the Toaster's system. And don't forget, you need synchronized video sources to access those fancy transitions. For pros, this is no problem, since pro cameras and VCRs accept master sync signals. Consumer-grade machines carry no provisions for synchronizing, but with consumer VCRs and laserdisc players beginning to sport time-base correctors, a consumer-grade TBC capable of syncing two video sources can't be far off. Start saving now—the Video Toaster may be ready when you are.

—Brent Butterworth

Video Data Services, a franchising operation that trains and equips professional videographers. "They really pushed the Amiga," says Impoco, who quickly became a convert. After mastering the Amiga and acquiring extra video gear, he progressed to training tapes, fashion shows, music videos, promotional and low-budget corporate videos.

He feels his multimedia skills help him trounce the competition. "I see other people's tapes and they look good. But then I play my tape for possible clients, and the bar charts, the multi-colored graphics and the animation blow them away."

Impoco's setup includes an Amiga 2000 with an extra disc drive and three megabytes of memory. He interfaces his computer and video gear with a Progressive Peripherals ProGen genlock and a Perfect Vision digitizer. In fact, the total cost of his computer setup is much less than the cost of his video gear, which includes both professional and consumer machines.

Impoco started in 1983 with a Konica tube camera and an Emerson portable VCR, but long ago upgraded to a fully equipped editing suite. Today his

post-production setup includes three VCRs: Toshiba's top-of-the-line Super VHS SVF-990 and two Panasonic VHS AG-1830s. And his shooting gear includes a Panasonic AG-450 S-VHS camcorder and a Panasonic AG-7400 portable VCR.

Although he uses several Amiga software packages, his work reveals a heavy reliance on Impulse's *Turbo Silver*, a program that renders and animates three-dimensional graphics. "*Turbo Silver* uses all the Amiga's colors and resolution," Impoco explains. "It lets me take a flat, two-dimensional picture and wrap it around a three-dimensional object.

"For example, I recently designed some pillars that looked like they were made out of crystal. All I had to do was outline the basic shape of the pillars using the mouse, then bring the crystal texture in from the digitizer, and presto—I had crystal pillars. No other machine could have given me that effect as easily."

"Every job leaves my studio with some graphics on it," he continues, "even if it's just a film-to-tape conversion. I start those out with an animated

title that says, "Our Home Movies." I tape a lot of dance recitals, and one of my tricks is to start with a digitized still of the front of the program, then make it open to reveal the initial shot of the video."

For a wedding last year, Impoco added a new medium—fabric—to his multimedia work. By connecting the Amiga to an Okidata printer equipped with a heat transfer ribbon, he was able to print a scene from the wedding video onto T-shirts.

Impoco gives multimedia much of the credit for his success. "The Amiga took me into a wholly different video realm," he says. "Without it, I might not even be in this business."

AMAZING AMATEUR

Most multimedia makers start by adding a computer to their video systems. Carol Hauk of Anderson, Indiana, began the other way around. In fact, her current setup doesn't even include a camcorder. The Amiga captured her attention when she saw how it could help her in her hobby as unofficial family genealogist.

Hauk, a General Motors production

The advertisement features a large, stylized blue 'Wireless' logo at the top, with three small black squares to its right. Below it, a large black oval contains the text 'Highest Quality Wireless Transmission Available!' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. In the bottom left corner, a black rectangular device labeled 'VIDICRAFT' and 'VIDICVIEW' is shown. The background is a light beige with faint, concentric circular patterns. In the bottom right corner, the text 'NOW AVAILABLE!' is written in red, and below it, the price '\$149.95 (set)' is displayed.

Making Multimedia Work--A Trio Of Systems

A multimedia system can be costly or economical, flush with options or limited to a basic few. Its basic building blocks should include a VCR, a camcorder or video camera, and a computer. Beyond this, the sky's the limit. Here's how three multimedia artists get the job done.

Martin Ricketts

Amiga 2000 computer	\$1,500
GVP 33-mHz/4-megabyte expansion board	\$3,200
IBM bridge board	\$1,100
ASDG serial controller (for laserdisc recorder)	\$250
2 MacStore 360-Mbyte hard drives	\$4,000 each
NEC DataSmart monitor	\$6,000
Memetics frame buffer	\$750
Digital Creations SuperGen 2000S genlock	\$1,600
Roland MIDI synthesizer module	\$1,000
Rhodes MIDI synthesizer module	\$1,000
Panasonic laserdisc recorder	\$8,500
2 JVC BR-S 810U Super VHS VCRs	\$6,540 each
2 JVC KY 15 broadcast cameras	\$12,000 each

worker, has always collected and restored family photographs. Several years ago, a friend showed her what an Amiga and a digitizer could do with still photos. Immediately, she decided she had to have one. "I thought this was the best

way I'd ever seen to keep photos and old home movies forever," she says. "So I went out and bought an Amiga 500, an Amiga 1084S monitor, a hard drive, a ProGen genlock and a DigiView Gold digitizer."

Tony Impoco

Amiga 2500 computer	\$2,000
2-megabyte memory expansion	\$300
Amiga 1084S monitor	\$300
Perfect Vision digitizer	\$180
Progressive Peripherals ProGen genlock	\$450
Panasonic AG-450 Super VHS camcorder	\$2,700
Toshiba SVF-990 Super VHS VCR	\$2,200
2 Panasonic AG-1830 VHS VCRs	\$1,800 each
Panasonic AG-7300 portable Super VHS VCR	\$3,200
Panasonic AG-1950 VHS VCR	\$1,500
Clarion 4-track audio recorder	\$500

Carol Hauk

Amiga 500 computer	\$600
Amiga 1084S monitor	\$300
GVP 40-megabyte hard drive	\$600
DigiView Gold digitizer	\$200
Panasonic WV-1000A video camera	\$285
Toshiba M-6550 VHS VCR	\$350
Magnavox VR-9722 VHS VCR	\$400

The digitizer acquires images through a Panasonic black & white surveillance video camera. By using a three-color filter wheel and taking three shots of a still photo or an object, the

continued on page 125

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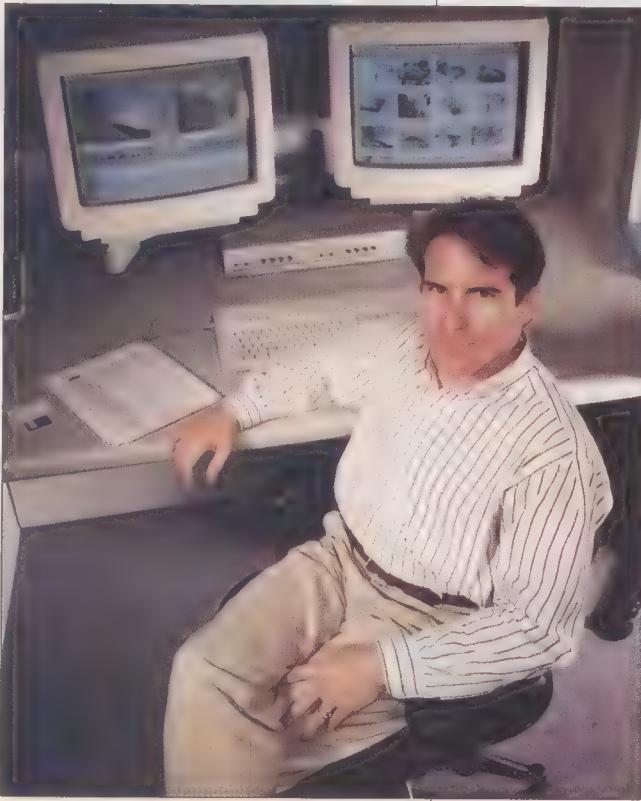
BY BOB BARLOW

How powerful is multimedia? An inside look at the state of the art.

ULTIMEDIA

Most home videographers would kill for a chance to spend ten minutes in Basil Pappas' shoes—or, to be accurate, in his chair in front of the Avid/I Media Composer. As editor at Manhattan's DIG-IPIX Editorial, a state-of-the-art electronic video post-production house, Pappas spends his days, and some nights, with the Avid system, pasting together shows for the likes of Coca Cola and Showtime.

The Avid system is at the cutting edge of multimedia video. Yet although its powers far exceed those available to hobbyists, even to many professional editors, this will not always be the case. Avid defines not just the future of multimedia—but what the rest of us can look forward to. However, before describing how Avid editing works, we offer a quick warning: Prepare to turn at least a little green with envy.



All Systems Go:
Don Levy, president of DIGIPIX Editorial, with an AVID/1 Media Composer and a series of shots from a Showtime fall preview created on AVID.



With the information stored in the form of a database, it becomes possible to view any piece of it at will and quickly—and to manipulate it in much the same way as a word processor manipulates blocks of text. But a look at the system's screens, a pair of 20-inch Mitsubishi multi-sync monitors, alerts a viewer immediately to the fact that this is no word processor, even if the system is based on a Macintosh IIx computer.

With a few whirls and clicks of the system's trackball, Pappas creates an electronic "bin" of shots from the database. Each one of these shots can be seen simultaneously, in color, with one or more of the other shots on the system's right-hand monitor. Edit points are communicated to the system with another click of the trackball. Edits proceed with absolutely no waiting for the material to be recorded, because, again, it's all on a randomly accessible disk.

If Pappas wants to capture new foot-

age—say, a snippet of 3-D graphics from Post Perfect, a full-service post-production facility located across the hall from DIGIPIX—it's no problem. He plays the new tape to the desired section, hits "digitize," and Avid captures the new material at 30 frames per second.

To anyone who's struggled with clumsy consumer-grade controls, establishing a basic sequence is heartbreakingly simple. Pappas "drags" shots with the trackball directly from the bin to the left-hand record monitor. Rearranging shots is just as easy. And anytime Pappas wants to see the result, he hits "play" and watches the show.

Another useful function of Avid is its ability to display "head/tail" pairs of every shot, making it easy to see how well each transition works. When adjustments are called for, Pappas clicks into the trim mode and interactively fine-tunes each edit at 30 frames per second until it's just right.

The Avid/1 Media Composer performs a raft of other neat tricks. It can sift and sort, which helps an operator find every shot whose title uses a particular word. It has an "undo" function, which allows users to do just that, as far back as 32 levels. Its "film view" feature

lets the operator see every frame of the program, with fully adjustable picture size. And it's capable of two-track digital audio as well.

When an edit session is complete, Avid can build a frame-by-frame version of the program from the original tapes. Or—and this is usually the case at DIGIPIX—it will output a list of time code numbers on a floppy disk, which is then used to control a final edit in an online editing suite. "More often than not," says Pappas, "the output from this room is a list of numbers."

Are we telling you all this out of a perverse desire to make videophiles squirm? Not at all. Consider this a dispatch from the not-too-distant future. Most of the technology that Pappas uses is rapidly trickling down to consumer levels.

"You can buy components for the Macintosh today that give it the ability to handle high-resolution video," Pappas explains. "But today, it costs a lot—about \$3,000 just for the video board. The other obstacle is storage. It takes almost 30 megabytes of memory to store one minute of video on this system. That much storage is not cheap. But prices fall fast in this industry, and technology

trickles down just as rapidly."

So don't feel bad. Just keep shooting. Set aside some cash. And make space in the basement for your new video gear—it's on the way. ■

TECH TIPS

Zippy zooms

Using your camcorder's zoom lens and a few editing tricks, you can create a great "strobe zoom" effect without special equipment. Mount the camcorder on a tripod, frame your subject with the lens zoomed all the way out, then manually zoom in. Repeat the shot several times at different zoom speeds, and at different shutter settings. When editing, instead of using the entire shot, freeze a frame, record for a moment, then advance a few frames and repeat the process. You'll end up with an exciting, strobe-like effect. To soften the effect, use the footage shot at slower shutter speeds.

Mario Massens
Fallbrook, California

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BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

THE LASER'S EDGE

New features, models & ideas add dash to disc players' appeal.

For years, doubters abounded. Video skeptics predicted that laserdiscs would wither on the shelves. That backers, fed up with low sales, would one day simply pull the plug. That laser buffs would find themselves orphans in a storm of VHS. With the faith of true believers, critics pounced on the laserdisc's disadvantages, in particular its inability to record and its low level of consumer awareness.

But this dark horse among formats is

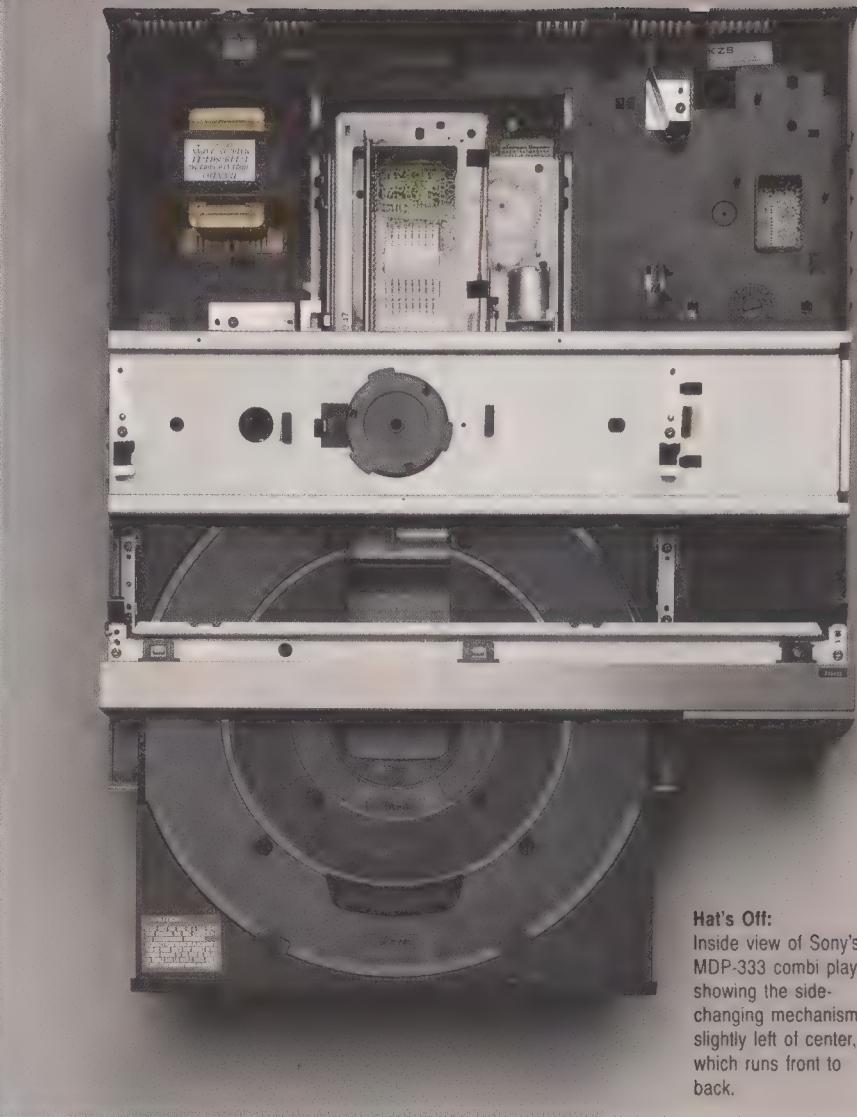
experiencing so unprecedented a burst of growth that its naysayers may soon come to be seen as what Spiro Agnew once called the nattering nabobs of negativism. Clearly, the laserdisc's impending doom has been exaggerated.

Its strength today comes from a variety of sources. More companies—13 at last count—are making disc players (see sidebar). The invention of the combination player has boosted the format's ver-

satility. Movies are moving to disc more quickly. Disc production is increasing. New optical formats—like CD-1, CD-ROM, CDTV and DVI—are being announced at a dizzying pace. And recent improvements in large-screen TV sets give laserdisc players better screens on which to show off.

A range of improvements in the basic laserdisc technology underlies some of these changes. These quiet refinements haven't drawn a great deal of attention, but they have been steadily raising the performance levels of laserdisc players, and setting the stage for the format's emergence as a mass entertainment medium.

Building on over a decade's worth of advances, recent players include such features as time-base correction, muscular transport systems, digital effects and audio circuits borrowed from the finest compact disc players. Laser decks that both play and record are already available to professionals, as are computer-controlled models that let users create their own interactive programs. ▶



Hat's Off:
Inside view of Sony's MDP-333 combi player showing the side-changing mechanism, slightly left of center, which runs front to back.



TOP PHOTO: LES MORSILLO

Picky Philips: The CDV600 samples digital audio one bit at a time, and checks each bit 256 times.



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22754	BEN-HUR (LTBX)	46.45
24111	BLACK RAIN	27.85
24046	CASUALTIES OF WAR (LTBX)	32.50
22888	CHINATOWN	37.15
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LASER'S EDGE

Recordability, laser's last frontier, is on the horizon.

As often happens with professional products, many of their costly features could soon trickle down to affordable levels. But that's what the future holds. In the following pages, we're going to fill in the gaps about what's already happened to laserdisc players, from digital enhancements to new applications. Even laserphiles may find themselves surprised by the progress.

To see the benefits of the laserdisc's decade of development, one need look no further than such combi players as Pioneer's CLD-3080 and Panasonic's

Clean Rooms And Metal Mothers: How Laserdiscs Are Made

The elegance of a laserdisc belies the effort that goes into its creation. Laserdisc manufacturing is one of the most complex and precise mass-production processes ever devised. Production lines use "clean rooms" that would look at home in a James Bond movie, and obey specifications that are much tougher than those for other electronic parts, like semiconductors. Here's a look at how the process works:

Laserdisc manufacturing starts out with a master videotape. The composite audio/visual signal from the tape is used to modulate the intensity of the laser beam that etches the master disc. The master disc is a piece of polished glass coated with a photosensitive chemical.

The laser records the A/V signal on the master disc in the form of microscopic pits only .000016 of an inch across and .000004 of an inch deep. These are so small that a laserdisc would be half a mile in diameter if each pit were enlarged to the size of a grain of rice. The pits (140 million on a CAV side) are arranged in concentric circles.

A stream of purified and ionized water bathes the disc, then a process similar to electroplating coats it with a thin layer of silver. The silvered master is plated with nickel to produce a metal "father." The father is used to stamp a metal "mother," which in turn generates nickel stamper discs that are used in the mass-production part of the process.

This process is actually more like making waffles than coins or records. The stamper disc is loaded onto an injection molder, with the disc's face nearly flush against a flat plate. The machine injects extremely pure plastic between the stamper face and the plate. The plastic cures in about 20 seconds. Everything takes place in a clean room, like those used in integrated circuit manufacturing, to lessen the chance of contaminating a disc.

The discs are then mounted on racks and sprayed with a 0.1-micron layer of aluminum. This step is critical. If too much or too little aluminum is applied, the disc is rejected. In the final step, a machine automatically glues the two halves of each disc together. A special spindle then rotates each disc at high speed to check for flaws.

—RW

LX-1000. These decks embody cumulative improvements made since the introduction of the format. The credit goes largely to Pioneer, which shepherded the laserdisc format through tough times in a decade dominated by VCRs.

Perhaps the most important improvement is digital frame memory, which produces special effects from CLV (constant linear velocity) discs. For the first time since the early '80s, when studios began releasing movies on CLV instead of CAV (constant angular velocity) discs, laserdisc users can see

still frames, slow motion and clean visible searches.

CAV discs could always produce these effects. CAV discs spin at a constant 1,800 revolutions per minute. One CAV video frame corresponds to a single 360-degree rotation of the disc. This configuration lets players produce special effects from an analog signal.

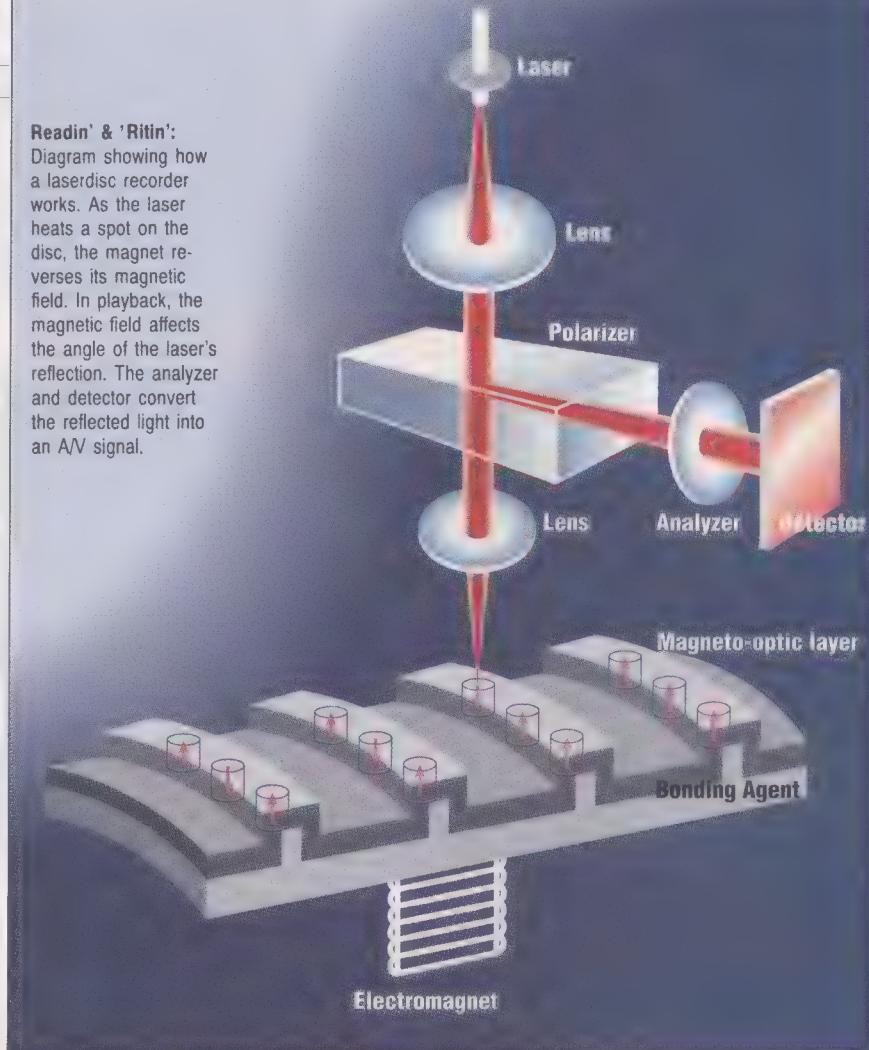
But on CLV discs, each frame occupies the same length of track. The frames are butted together end to end around the disc, without regard to where they fall on the disc. The outer edge of the disc may produce several frames from one revolution, but the number of frames per revolution decreases as the pickup moves closer to the disc's center. To compensate for this decrease, the disc spins at a lower speed as the pickup moves closer to the center. Because the tracks are not arranged in a consistent pattern, it's impossible to produce still frames or slow motion without storing the frames in digital memory.

Digital effects were expensive rarities when they were introduced. But as the price of memory chips plummeted from a fortune in the early '80s to less than a dollar a chip today, manufacturers have found it possible to add digital effects to laserdisc players priced as low as \$1,000.

Recent high-end players like Panasonic's LX-1000 also use digital memory for time-base correction. Pioneer's new LD-S2 goes several steps farther. The LD-S2 digitizes the video signal as it comes off the pickup, and the signal remains in that form until just before it leaves the player. The deck's digital signal processing components include a time-base corrector, a luminance/chrominance separator and color noise reduction circuitry.

While a CLV disc manages to squeeze a two-hour movie into a single disc, the break in the feature at the half-way point still presents an unwanted interruption. Pioneer's response to this problem was the LD-W1, the first machine that could play four sides of two discs, each loaded into its own disc drawer. The LD-W1 accomplished what it was supposed to, but rather slowly and noisily. Pioneer discontinued it, but incorporated its side-changing technology

Readin' & 'Ritin':
Diagram showing how a laserdisc recorder works. As the laser heats a spot on the disc, the magnet reverses its magnetic field. In playback, the magnetic field affects the angle of the laser's reflection. The analyzer and detector convert the reflected light into an A/V signal.



into several combi players.

The side-changing mechanism consists of a U-shaped track on which the laser pickup rides. After the laser travels to the center of one side of the disc, it follows the track back across the disc and around its edge to the other side. The earliest side-changers took 20 seconds to make the switch. The newest players are much faster—Panasonic's LX-200 takes only 11 seconds.

MOTOR SKILLS

The 1,800-rpm maximum speed of laserdiscs strains both the disc and the player's drive mechanism. This is why you should never attempt to play a cracked or a chipped disc—it might shatter inside the player. To cope with this stress, a player must clamp a disc firmly onto its spindle. But the clamp must also release quickly, for easy disc changing.

Early players relied on a spring-loaded clamp mounted in the lid. The clamp closed over the disc to form a sandwich-type lock. But recent decks use a more sophisticated magnetic clamping system, introduced on Pioneer's LD-W1 and CLD-909. The advantage, in addition to a firmer grip on the disc, is that it lets the latching mechanism disengage itself from the disc for playback. This motion isolates the disc and the motor assembly from the rest of the player, reducing vibration.

For the LD-S1, the LD-S2's predecessor, Pioneer further reduced vibration with a unique pressure bearing that created a cushion of liquid silicone around the motor shaft. The LD-S2 goes even further, adding a thicker spindle, ■ 12-pound honeycomb aluminum die-

cast base and a heavy chassis made from carbon steel and polymer resin. The unit's double-shielded structure and 68-pound weight complete the vibration-damping precautions.

TRUER TONES

With the entry of audio manufacturers such as Yamaha and Kenwood into the laserdisc field, the newest generation of decks shows a heightened attention to sound. Kenwood's LVD-300, Yamaha's CDV-1700 and other recent high-end decks incorporate 8x oversampling, a feature previously reserved for the best CD players. Greater amounts of oversampling reduce the potential for

sampling errors. The circuitry reads the disc's information eight times, instead of four times (as on most laserdisc players), so there's less chance of reading it wrong, and less chance that errors can degrade the sound.

Taking another cue from the CD field, Philips incorporated one-bit sampling into its new CDV500 and CDV600 combi players. Both decks read a disc's information one bit at a time, instead of 16 to 20 bits at once, as do most laserdisc players. The merits of one-bit processing versus conventional processing have been hotly debated by CD enthusiasts over the last few years, but no victor has been chosen. Both approaches work well, and few, if any, home users can tell the difference between them.

FOR THE RECORD

Fans of the format have always hoped for a deck that can record as well as play. The good news is, it's here. The bad news is, it's still too expensive for home use. But if disc-based video grows as fast as the number of new formats—including interactive media like Philips' CD-I and Commodore's CDTV—expect prices to fall. And as prices fall, the technology is almost sure to trickle



Higher Education: Industrial decks like Pioneer's LD-V2200 bring multimedia into the classroom.

LASER'S EDGE

Three to Get Ready:
Sharp's MV-D2000
functions as both a
combi player and a
three-disc CD changer.



down to consumer level.

Panasonic's new \$35,000 LQ-4000 optical magnetic disc recorder is the latest of a new breed of players (which includes models by Pioneer and Sony) that uses a combination of optical and magnetic technology to produce high-quality video and sound.

The LQ-4000 can write, erase and rewrite audio/visual signals in two modes: a high-resolution mode that holds 20 minutes of video or 36,000 still frames on each side of a disc, and a standard mode that fills a disc with 30 min-

utes of video or 54,000 still frames per side. The high-resolution mode produces over 450 lines of horizontal resolution, the low-res mode, over 380 lines.

Instead of cutting a series of pits into a disc, optical magnetic disc recorders (OMDRs) like the LQ-4000 alter the magnetism of a thin layer of metal sandwiched between the disc's outer glass layers. The laser brings the metal layer up to a temperature at which its magnetic field becomes unstable. A small magnet on the other side of the disc redirects the layer's field downward.

During playback, the laser runs at lower power so that it doesn't alter the signal recorded on the disc. The metal inside the disc reflects the laser at slightly different angles depending on the direction of the magnetic field at the point the laser strikes. A pickup receives the fluctuating reflections, which create on/off patterns like those generated by the flats and pits of a conventional laserdisc.

To erase a disc, the LQ-4000 flips the magnet that runs on the opposite side of the disc from the laser. A separate erase laser continuously irradiates the disc, orienting its entire magnetic field upward. Panasonic says its discs last through one million write/erase cycles, which would leave a videotape looking like used dental floss.

Why spend \$35,000 on an OMDR when a good professional VCR costs about one-eighth as much? Of course, laserdiscs offer terrific pictures and sound. But their big advantage is fast access. Decks like the LQ-4000 can find any frame on one side of a disc in less than a second, as compared to access times of up to three minutes for a VCR.

Not many consumers can afford a video deck that costs more than a state-of-the-art home theater, but prices for OMDRs may soon plummet. "OMDRs are expensive because they've been in limited production," explains Tim Meyerhoff, product manager for Panasonic's optical disc division. "We've recently arranged for full-scale production of the decks and the discs, which will

Who's Got What— A Complete Guide To Laserdisc Players

With so many companies jumping into the market for laserdisc players, the number of single-disc and combination players has grown from a handful to a swarm. Here is a list of who makes what, with suggested prices rounded to the nearest dollar.

Denon: LA-2000, \$700; LA-3000, \$1,000.
Kenwood: LVD-300, \$700.
Magnavox: CDV305, \$550; CDV485, \$700.
Mitsubishi: M-V7010, \$1,100.
Panasonic: LX-200, \$850; LX-1000, \$1,400.
Philips: CDV400, \$600; CDV500, \$830; CDV600, \$1,100.
Pioneer: LD-870, \$500; CLD-980, \$500; CLD-1080, \$600; CLD-2080, \$850; CLD-3080, \$1,400; CLD-92, \$2,000; LD-S2, \$3,500.
Quasar: LD9090, \$900.
Radio Shack: MD-1000, \$500.
RCA: LDR300, \$700.
Sharp: MV-D100, \$840; MV-D2000, \$1,900.
Sony: MDP-333, \$650; MDP-210, \$700; MDP-510, \$1,000.
Yamaha: CDV-1700, \$700.

—Brent Butterworth

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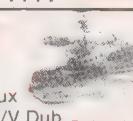
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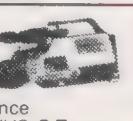
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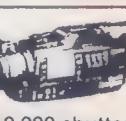
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bring prices down. In two or three years, we should be a major presence in the professional video field, and we'll probably be able to offer a \$2,500 consumer model in five to seven years."

Meyerhoff predicts that OMDRs may also get a boost from new lasers that could increase the OMDR's limited recording time. By using a short-wavelength blue laser to create and read smaller tracks than current red lasers, "an OMDR could record up to two hours of video on one side of a disc, which would really make it competitive with consumer VCRs," says Meyerhoff. Unfortunately, engineers have to clear several technological hurdles to make blue lasers practical for mass production.

PORT POTENTIAL

The addition of an RS-232 computer port to the back of a laserdisc player converts the machine from a hot home theater component to an educational tool. Schools have begun using decks like Pioneer's industrial LD-V2200 to play any of hundreds of courseware discs.

The computer port allows IBM, Apple and Amiga computers to start and stop discs, and to access still frames.

Fifth-graders now use disc players to create and edit interactive lessons.

Teachers use special computer software to select specific segments of discs for incorporation into automated lessons. The LD-V2200 also includes a character generator teachers can use to add text to programs.

A wand-shaped bar code reader opens up the LD-V2200's multimedia potential. When passed over codes included in a book's text, the wand converts the bar code into infrared commands for the laserdisc player. The deck searches for the appropriate segment and plays it back.

For example, a book about African wildlife might include a bar code inside a chapter about lions. By passing the wand over the bar code, a student triggers a short video showing how lions live. This system combines screen text, video, audio and printed materials into an inter-

active multimedia presentation. And unlike other proposed interactive disc formats, it's already in widespread use.

At Cherry Creek Elementary School in Cherry Creek, Colorado, fifth- and sixth-grade students used laserdisc players and bar code readers to create their own learning materials. They chose the subject, wrote the text, inserted computer-generated bar codes, and selected audio/visual support programs from the laserdisc. The end result was a precisely edited multimedia presentation.

Wait a minute—elementary school students editing video? Most adults can't even do that with VCRs. In fact, laserdisc's precise operation and clean pictures and sound may soon make it the highest quality, easiest-to-use video editing system available. Laserdisc-based editing systems are just now entering film production. One example is Lucasfilm's Edit Droid, which uses ten or more computer-controlled players, each containing an identical disc, to rapidly call up scenes.

If laserdisc-based editing is simple enough for kids to use, perhaps computer-controlled, recordable laserdisc systems will get desktop video into the home of the average consumer. ■



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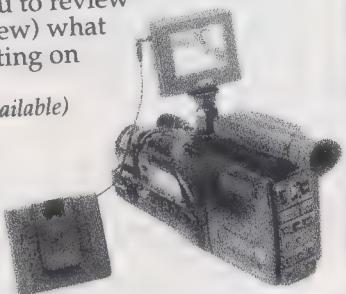
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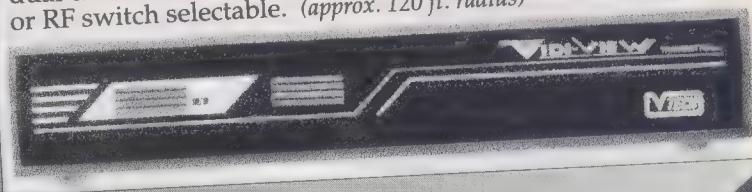


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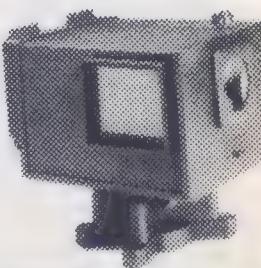


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CUSTOM INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH

BY STAN PINKWAS

DESERT CLASSIC

Vacationing in style with audio/video in every room and total interactivity.

"Installation of the Month" premieres this issue as a new Video Magazine feature. Each month, with the cooperation of the Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association, we'll look at an outstanding home entertainment system.

The hills beyond the golf course shimmer with a sun-drenched energy. The greens sparkle. But the house beside the course pulses with the bright rhythms of a remarkable entertainment system: nearly a dozen big-screen televisions and a flock of VCRs complemented by

enough audio muscle to service a quartet of smaller retreats. With nine "entertainment zones" spread across more than 6,000 square feet, this five-bedroom Indian Wells vacation villa is a California desert classic.

The magic lies in the way everything in the interior's design successfully conspires to conceal the complexity of this home's electronic life. The graceful, flowing rooms, a long quiet corridor, the casual outdoor pool landscaped with thick-trunked palm trees barely suggest the audio/video power available at the touch of a few buttons.

Numbers tell part of the story; in this case they're awesome. The system's 129 components include 11 TV sets and seven VCRs, most by Mitsubishi; 60 speakers, most hand-painted to match the decor of their settings; and 14 CD players and audiocassette decks with appropriate numbers of tuners, amplifiers and equalizers. Eight thousand feet of cable and 11 remote control panels weave the network into a whole, and reveal the installation's secret.

The components are designed to be "totally interactive," explains Vince Taylor of V. Frederick International, the company that created the system. The house's electronic zones consist of each bedroom, an office, the living room, the dining room and an outdoor area. In addition to a central system based in a nook off the living room, each zone is

continued on page 120

CEDIA

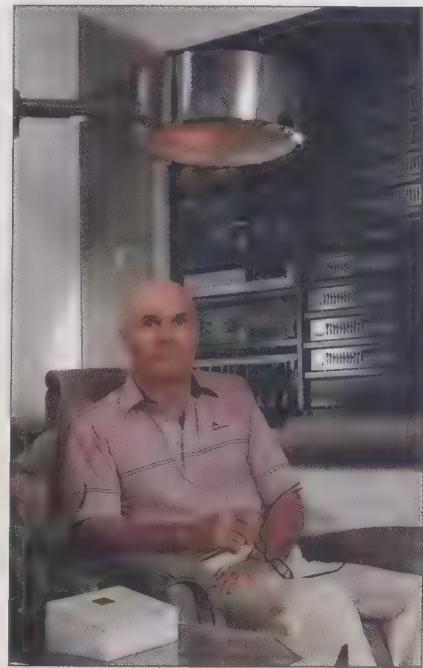
The Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association is a nationwide non-profit trade organization made up of companies that specialize in installing electronic entertainment, automation, security and communication systems in the home. CEDIA may be contacted by telephoning 1-800-CEDIA30 or writing: CEDIA, 10400 Roberts Road, Palos Hills, IL 60465.

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State of the Hearth:
Living room with a TV nook at the rear (above) and an elegant fireplace features 30-inch tube TV sets and built-in speakers, while the private office (right) has a self-contained A/V system that can be isolated from the main network.





Private Access:
A/V designer Vince Taylor with the system's primary components and one of its 11 control pads (above); and the master bedroom (left), which has a monitor and a VCR that lower out of sight into a custom marble wood cabinet.

GO VIDEO

FIRST TEST OF THE FIRST 2-DECK VCR

We explore the VCR-2, a new dubbing deck that breaks the dual-well barrier.

Go Video's VCR-2, the first dual-deck VHS VCR in the United States, has finally arrived. The VCR-2 eliminates dubbing hassles: You don't need patch cords, you don't have to select the recorder input, and you don't need to use two hands to start two machines at the same time. Just load the original in deck 1, the blank in deck 2, and hit the "Copy Tape" button. Of course, this doesn't work if the original tape carries Macrovision copy protection signals.

But Go Video didn't stop with this. The VCR-2, which goes by the model number GV 2000, also boasts two features we've never seen before: a 100-year calendar (good to 2089) and a 16-event timer. The \$1,000 deck's more conventional features include linear-track stereo with Dolby noise reduction, a 155-channel tuner, two-speed locking search and onscreen programming. Either cas-

ette well can be used to play back or record, and both are controlled through an extensive menu system and a unique remote.

Even with all these features, there are some limitations. The VCR-2 has only one tuner, so a user can only tape one broadcast program at a time unless he attaches a separate tuner, like one

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 564

from a TV set. Nor does it have hi-fi audio, which is typically present in machines in this price class. The two-head decks produce annoying noise bands during searches at SP and LP speeds. While Go Video bills the VCR-2 as an editing deck, the absence of frame advance and slow motion make precise cueing almost impossible. And because there is no flying erase head, the VCR-2 leaves moire patterns and occasional



Just Do It: A single remote operates both cassette wells plus a menu of onscreen dubbing functions.

glitches at edit points.

On the plus side, the VCR-2 has some nice features, such as remote load, which finishes loading a tape that is partially pushed into the slot, and remote eject, which does the opposite. These features make tape unloading and reloading effortless, which is important because heat generated inside a VCR can damage tapes left to sit. Also, a user can disable some of the VCR-2's automatic features, such as auto play, auto rewind, and remote load and eject.

Description. The GV 2000 is warm gray with touches of red, white and gold in legends and logos. At 20-1/4 inches wide and 16-1/2 inches deep, it is larger than most VCRs we encounter.

The top of the front panel holds the power switch and the two tape hatches. A center band contains two identical sets of controls, each with buttons for



All Systems Go: The VCR-2 combines two VHS cassette wells in a single body for simplified dubbing, except for tapes with Macrovision anti-copy coding.

stop/eject, play, rewind/search, fast forward/search, pause/edit, source and record. Each set of controls has three source indicators. A display window separates the control sets, and surrounds the copy tape button, which has an inset indicator light.

Centered on the bottom band are a TV view button (which selects the source for the output), and controls and indicators for deck 1, deck 2, tuner, audio/video input, VCR and TV. Covered compartments sit at either side. The left one contains rotary controls for deck 1

tracking and sharpness, plus buttons for menu, down, save, next and escape. The right compartment holds identical rotary controls for deck 2, and buttons for VCR, down, up, time/counter and reset.

The back panel supports the power cord, F-connectors for RF input and output, a channel 3/4 RF output selector and RCA-type jacks for video and stereo audio input and output. There are also rotary still-frame tracking controls for deck 1 and deck 2.

The wedge-shaped remote provides a separate set of controls for each deck.

Go Video GV 2000 Dual-Deck VCR-2

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$1,000

Weight:
26 pounds

Dimensions:
4-1/4 x 20-1/4 x 16-1/2
inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
60 W

Tape Format:
VHS—two transports

Tape Speeds:
SP, LP, EP

Video Heads:
2 per deck

**Cue & Review
(Search):**
locking—5/7x, SP; 5/7x,
LP; 9/21x, EP

**Fast Forward/Rewind
Time:**
4-1/4 min for T-120
cassette

Remote:
IR wireless with two
sets of buttons for stop/
eject, play, rewind/
search, fast forward/
search, pause, source
switching and record;

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Tape Format:
VHS—two transports

Tape Speeds:
SP, LP, EP

viewed, channel up,
channel down, 10-digit
keypad and a TV view
switcher for deck 1,

deck 2, tuner and A/V in

Counter Digits: 4

Linear Audio: stereo

Tuning Method:
one tuner—frequency
synthesis

Channel Selectors:
programmable up/down
scan on VCR, scan plus
direct access on remote

Preset Method:
auto program plus add/
erase from scan se-
quence

**Broadcast Tuning
Range:** 2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable Tuning Range:
2 to 13, 4A to W+58

Timer:
16-event, lifetime calendar

Special Features:

auto channel-change,
channel lock, counter
memory, still frame,
auto rewind, auto play
speed select, remote
load and eject

Absent Features:

flying erase head, audio
dub, video dub, hi-fi
AFM audio, separate
eject, insert edit, pro-
gram start locator/index/
cue, frame advance,

slow motion, speed
play, visible fast forward
and rewind

Accessories:
remote control with bat-
tery, instructional
videotape, 75-ohm an-
tenna cable and

These include buttons for stop/eject,
play, rewind/search, fast forward/search,
pause/still, source and record. Buttons
for menu, save, escape and cursor arrows
operate the menu system. Nearby sit
buttons for power, TV/VCR, copy,
counter and reset. The group in front
comprises a ten-digit keypad and but-
tons for display, last channel viewed,
channel up and channel down. The
group nearest the user determines which
source feeds the output: deck 1, deck 2,
tuner or A/V in.

Operation. Operating the deck is

antenna transformer

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:
200 lines

Video S/N, Un-

weighted:
deck 1—42.4 dB, SP;
43.1 dB, LP; 40.1 dB,
EP; deck 2—44.1 dB,
SP; 44.1 dB, LP; 42.1
dB, EP

Video S/N, Weighted:

deck 1—49 dB, SP;
49.7 dB, LP; 46.5 dB,
EP; deck 2—51.6 dB,
SP; 51.1 dB, LP; 49.5
dB, EP

Chroma AM S/N:

deck 1—49.1 dB, SP;
46.8 dB, LP; 42.9 dB,
EP; deck 2—49.5 dB,
SP; 47.5 dB, LP; 41.2
dB, EP

Chroma PM S/N:

deck 1—38.4 dB, SP;
37.8 dB, LP; 37.2 dB,
EP; deck 2—39.2 dB,
SP; 38.2 dB, LP; 36.4
dB, EP

**Audio Frequency Re-
sponse, -3 dB:**
SP—100 Hz-5 kHz;
LP—100 Hz-2 kHz;
EP—100 Hz-1.7 kHz

Audio S/N: 38.4 dB

Audio Distortion:

1.9 percent

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
fair/weak

Audio Quality:
poor

Operational Ease:
good

Overall Performance:
fair

straightforward but frustrating, because unlike most VCRs, the VCR-2 does not have a buffer that remembers commands. For example, to go from play to rewind, a user must hit stop, wait for the deck to fully halt, then hit rewind—punching stop and rewind in rapid succession doesn't work. Similarly, one deck must finish loading before the second deck can be loaded. You can't hurry things up. Yet this simplicity can be appealing.

Controls for the menu system are organized more clearly on the remote than on the front panel, but since the menu blocks out much of the screen, making adjustments interrupts any program you may be watching. The dedicated buttons for output source switching are more convenient than the single button on the deck that cycles through the options.

The remote performs all the opera-



Inside Story: A look at the VCR-2's interior shows how the twin cassette wells are arranged.

tions available from the front panel, and adds a direct-access tuning keypad that doubles for menu selection and entries, a dedicated button to call up the master onscreen display and a last-channel-viewed button. Ease of operation from the remote is good.

Performance. While the absence of a few features and the way some controls work can be frustrating, the biggest

disappointment is the VCR-2's performance. The problem starts with picture quality, which combines outstanding video and chroma signal-to-noise ratios with only 200 to 210 lines of horizontal resolution.

The picture has a soft feel: features smear, hair looks a bit leathery and trees and grass display a green that seems to bleed. However, the high video and chroma outputs produce stronger color in copies and maintain resolution levels well.

As the data in the box shows, deck 2 performed slightly better than deck 1 in our test. Since deck 2 serves as the recorder in standard copy operation, this difference may be intentional. Picture quality is fair to weak.

Audio quality, too, is disappointing. We measured frequency response, at the -3 dB (half power) points, as 100 hertz to

continued on page 125

LONG ROAD TO A FAST START

Should Americans acquire a taste for Go-Video's VCR-2, the Scottsdale, Arizona company will march a giant step closer to triumphing in its remarkable effort to develop and market a dual-deck VCR. For more than six years, Go-Video has struggled to overcome so many obstacles that the mere debut in stores of its long-anticipated, repeatedly delayed product is itself an achievement.

R. Terren Dunlap, Go-Video's evangelistic, Japan-bashing CEO, has cast Go-Video as an American David slinging its innovative dual-well deck against a corporate Goliath of Japanese VCR makers. Yet so confident is Dunlap of success that he predicts the VCR-2 will do to single-deck VCRs what Xerox copiers did to carbon paper.

The VCR-2 is not the first dual-deck VCR to surface. Samsung and Sharp have tested consumer models in past years, Sony fields an 8mm industrial version, and a company called Amstrad is planning an entry in Britain. But none has successfully tapped the kind of mass market Go-Video believes is waiting to be courted.

Go-Video's story began in 1983 when Dunlap co-founded the company with \$60,000 drawn against a clutch of personal credit cards. Within a year, Go-Video, while operating as a video production service, had drawn up plans for a dual-deck VCR and applied for a patent.

But by 1987 prospects seemed bleak. Go-Video had hit a wall in its search for companies to supply parts for its VCR. Dunlap believes this was the result of a conspiracy among Japanese and Korean companies to boycott his effort. Led by Dunlap, a former prosecuting attorney,

Go-Video filed a multimillion-dollar federal antitrust complaint backing up its charges.

Go-Video also faced problems on a second front. Movie studios hated the idea of a VCR that could copy pre-recorded films at the touch of a button, bypassing the anti-copy systems then beginning to spread through the industry and depriving Hollywood of sales.

A year after filing suit, Go-Video won its U.S. patent. Shortly afterward, it agreed to include circuits that would respect the Macrovision anti-copy system. Appeased, Jack Valenti, head of the Motion Picture Association of America, bestowed upon Go-Video the studios' blessing.

In 1989, Go-Video settled portions of its suit, winning some \$2 million, which it used to fuel further development. More important, Samsung agreed, as part of the settlement, to manufacture the core of the VCR-2. In short order, Go-Video found a company to distribute the VCR-2, hired Intel to manufacture a special microprocessor for the deck's dubbing operations, and turned up at that year's Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago to demonstrate a prototype.

Another year of design changes and fine-tuning followed, amid some doubt within the industry that a product would ever emerge. Now it has, and Dunlap says the first 30,000 decks are already sold. He expects Go-Video to grow fast and promises that new products are in the works. And Dunlap reminds anyone still skeptical about Go-Video's intent that "Everything we've done, they said we couldn't do."

—Stan Pinkwas

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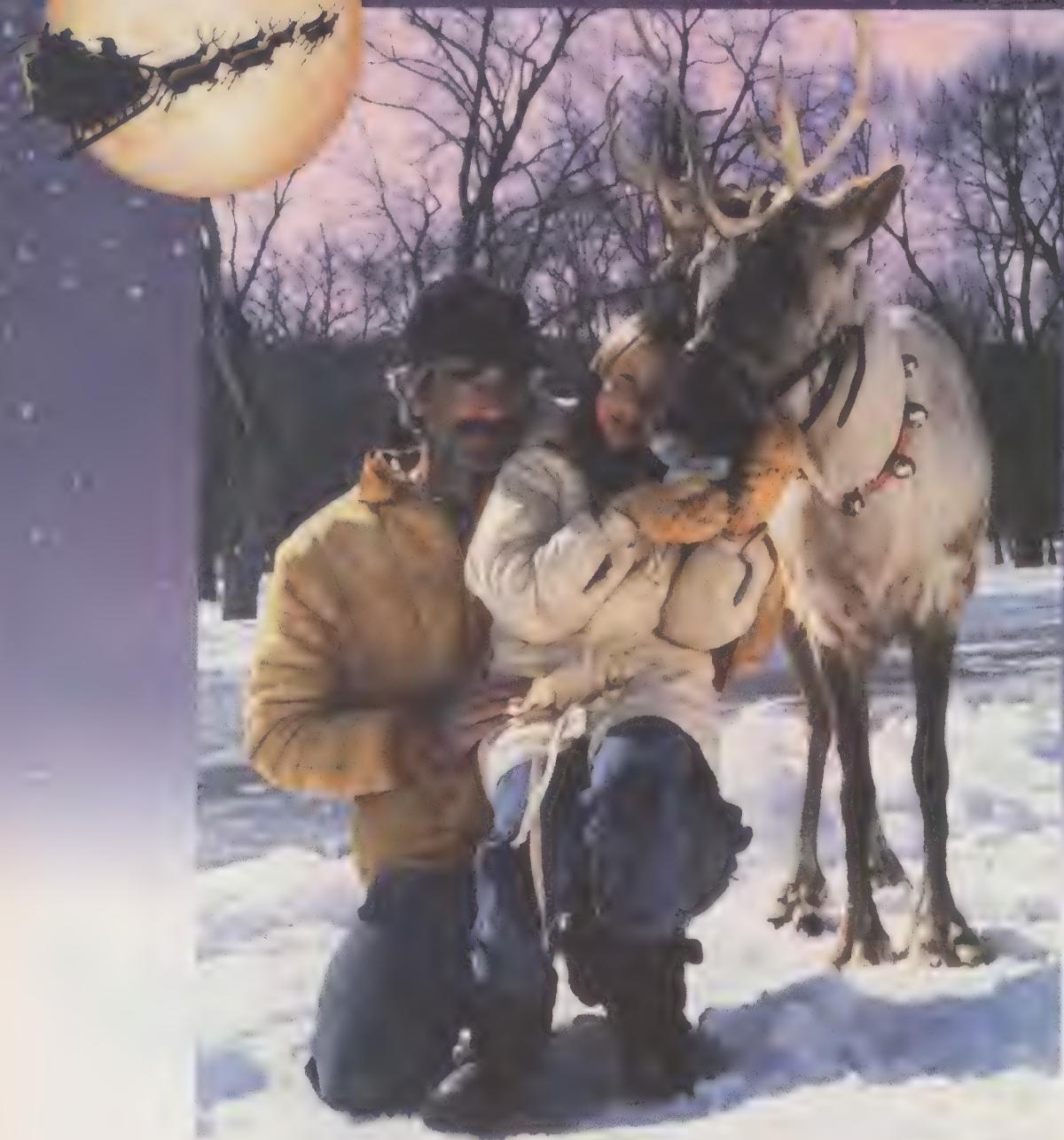
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PROGRAMMING

Film of the Month

Back to the Future *Part III*

1990. Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Mary Steenburgen; dir. Robert Zemeckis. 118m. (PG) Hi ss cc no list price. LV \$34.98. MCA/Universal. V image: good.

With the flagging momentum of a long-distance runner, the *Back to the Future* series staggers to a close in its third installment. If *Part II* carried manic behavior to the point of hysteria, *Part III* moves to a slower tempo, dropping good ol' Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) and Doc Brown (Christopher Lloyd) into the Wild West for weary sagebrush antics. Halfway through this endless two hours, you'll be begging for our heroes to crank up the DeLorean time machine and go somewhere — anywhere!

"It's a long story, Doc," says Marty at the start of the latest round of time-travel misadventures. Now there's an understatement: It's hard to imagine the uninitiated making sense of the narrative in midstream, since even a veteran viewer will have trouble keeping the pieces in order. Of course, coherence isn't the point. In jumping pell-mell through time, *Future* makes a cheerful mockery of any pretension to logic.

Part III finds Marty following Doc to Hill Valley circa 1885, where the mad scientist has settled in happily as a blacksmith. McFly's mission: Get them both back to the 1980s before Doc is gunned down by outlaw "Mad Dog" Tannen (Thomas F. Wilson), an ancestor of perennial bully Biff. Among other complications, the DeLorean's out of gas, which hasn't been invented yet, and Doc has fallen in love with sweet schoolmarm Clara Clayton (Mary Steenburgen). It shouldn't be giving too much away to note that all ends happily after a drawn-out climax involving a runaway train.

The more leisurely pace of *III* may have been designed to spotlight the actors rather than gimmicks, but the leading men seem unprepared to seize the



Westward Ho!
Christopher Lloyd (left) and Michael J. Fox ride the range in *Back to the Future Part III*.



moment. Michael J. Fox explores new dimensions in blandness, the running gag about Marty's temper having long ago worn thin. While giving the lonely-guy Doc a soul mate was a nice touch, Christopher Lloyd simply dulls the character's lunatic edge to show gentler emotions. You'd think this excitable oddball would have a more distinctive reaction. The graceful Mary Steenburgen's beatific smile remains her greatest asset, and trusty Thomas F. Wilson portrays another comically wicked villain with impressive gusto. (But enough already with the manure.)

Back to the Future Part III offers a host of sly pop-culture asides to tickle a knowing audience, from Marty's version of Michael Jackson's moonwalk, to his pseudonym (Clint Eastwood), to an appearance by rockers ZZ Top as members of a hillbilly band. Despite the unfailing good humor, however, the film seems played out, even decadent, more concerned with self-referential dead ends than telling a story. Supposedly the last of the series, the film does leave open the possibility of further sequels. Thanks but no thanks.

—Jon Young

Drama



Food For Thought:
Dinner is no easy task in *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover* (left), while Michael Caine finds a deadly new route to success in *A Shock to the System*.

Cinema Paradiso, last year's Oscar-winner for Best Foreign Film, may be the best movie ever made about going to the movies. In a sleepy post-World War II Sicilian town, life centers around work and the local bijou, a second home where dreams are fed and sorrows forgotten. Moviegoing here is a communal experience — the whole spectacle of life, from conception to death, plays out under the leaky roof of the Paradiso.

Toto (Salvatore Cascio), a little imp if ever there was one, is the most movie-obsessed of the lot, sneaking in to watch the new pictures before the local priest has the kisses edited out, and continually pestering Alfredo (Philippe Noiret), the projectionist. Alfredo obviously loves the fatherless Toto like the son he never had, even when he's chasing him out of the projection booth for the umpteenth time. The boy finally gets himself taken on as an apprentice; he'll have to do a little growing up before he learns that there's more to life than the movies.

Giuseppe Tornatore's vision is unabashedly idealized — you may remember the entire picture as being sunlit, even its movie-theater scenes. The town's "characters" are presented in broad strokes, the incidents in operatic fashion. Cascio hogs the screen as easily as he snatches film strips from the projection-room floor, and Noiret's performance is a career highlight. The movie loses some of its charm when Toto grows into a love-struck adolescent, but the final scenes push the emotional buttons

as effectively as anything since *E.T.*

The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover presents a vision of Hell to contrast with Tornatore's Paradiso. Director Peter Greenaway's Inferno is presided over by Albert, a gangster who holds court nightly at the *haute cuisine* restaurant he owns. Here he obscenely spews his presumed knowledge and wisdom when he isn't busy gorging himself, or inflicting physical and verbal abuse on anyone in sight.

Georgina (Helen Mirren), his wife, finds an escape when she spies Michael (Alan Howard), a quiet, gentle fellow, eating alone in a corner. With the connivance of the long-suffering chef (Richard Bohringer), they contrive to have sex in the various back rooms of the kitchen between courses, while Albert is busy finding new ways to terrorize the staff and the patrons.

Shot with wide-screen pans in vast spaces — which is why you'll want the letterboxed version of the film, though two pan-and-scan versions, including an R-rated one with 23 minutes removed, are also available — the movie is a political allegory in which Greenaway seems to take delight in continually shoving the disgusting and appalling in our faces. The formal beauty of Richard's dishes and the quiet passion of the lovemaking are overpowered by Albert's cruelty and gluttony. In this picture, art and love may elevate the world but it's bestiality that rules it.

Cook isn't remotely likeable, or meant to be. Despite its billing as a black comedy, it isn't particularly funny, ei-



Prone to Violence: Fred Frenger (Alec Baldwin) leaves a string of bodies in his wake in *Miami Blues*.

ther. It is physically overwhelming, but pretty obvious in its arguments.

Strapless, directed by playwright David Hare (*Plenty*), is less stylish but more sophisticated than *Cook*. Lillian, (Blair Brown), an American doctor living in London, encounters a mysterious businessman (Bruno Ganz) who wages

continued on page 100

REVIEWED

CINEMA PARADISO

1989. Philippe Noiret, Salvatore Cascio; wr./dir. Giuseppe Tornatore. 123m. (NR) Hi sub. \$89.99. HBO. V image: good.

THE COOK, THE THIEF, HIS WIFE & HER LOVER

1990. Richard Bohringer, Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, Alan Howard; wr./dir. Peter Greenaway. 123 min. (NR) Hi cc \$89.95. (NR) let. \$89.95. (R) 100m. \$89.95. also sp. sub. version. Vidmark. V image: good.

STRAPLESS

1988. Blair Brown, Bruno Ganz, Bridget

Fonda; wr./dir. David Hare. 103m. (R) Hi cc \$79.95. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: fair.

A SHOCK TO THE SYSTEM

1990. Michael Caine, Elizabeth McGovern, Peter Riegert; dir. Jan Egleson. 90m. (R) Hi cc \$89.99. HBO. V image: good.

MIAMI BLUES

1990. Fred Ward, Alec Baldwin, Jennifer Jason Leigh; wr./dir. George Armitage. 97m. (R) Hi cc \$89.98. Orion. V image: good.

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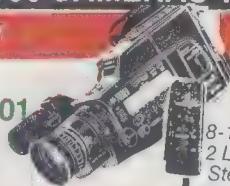
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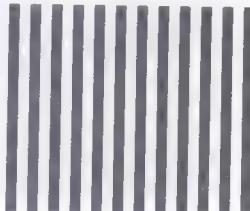


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Reach For the Sky:
Robin Williams and
Fran Drescher are held
hostage in *Cadillac
Man* (above), while Mel
Gibson and Goldie
Hawn make a lofty es-
cape in *Bird on a Wire*.



Far and away, the most noteworthy comedy title this month is *Mystery Train*. This quirky independent production from director Jim Jarmusch (*Stranger Than Paradise*, *Down By Law*) tells three separate stories of very different people who find themselves in the same squalid Memphis hotel on the same night.

First we meet Jun and Mitzuco, a Japanese couple on a pilgrimage to the homeland of their idols, Elvis Presley and Carl Perkins. As the couple explores the desolate back streets of Memphis, delighted to be in this mecca of popular culture, the film presents a portrait of America that would make anybody homesick for Yokohama. After an unimpressive visit to Sun Records, they check into the seedy Arcade Hotel, where every room displays a different likeness of Elvis. Despite the cultural differences, we can all identify with Jun and Mitzuco's bickering into the night.

The other two stories involve a woman stranded in Memphis en route to Rome with the remains of her late husband. She winds up sharing a room with a local chatterbox, who talks incessantly about her British boyfriend. After a visit from Elvis' ghost, we join the last story, which is about the chatterbox's British boyfriend (The Clash's Joe Strummer) and his buddies, inept even as thugs, and their attempt to rob a liquor store and hide out at the Arcade.

Jarmusch's slow, deliberate style allows him to invest his odd characters

with depth to spare. Even minor players—the night clerk (Screamin' Jay Hawkins) and the bellboy (Cinque Lee, Spike's brother)—are better drawn than any of the characters in the three movies below.

In *Bird on a Wire*, Mel Gibson is Rick Jarmain, a man whose past involvement with international drug smugglers has forced him into permanent exile as a participant in the witness-protection program. As it happens, the same day his enemies track him down at the gas station in which he works, his former lover, Marianne Graves (Goldie Hawn), inadvertently stops in for a fill-up.

Marianne accidentally rescues Rick

REVIEWED

BIRD ON A WIRE

1990. Mel Gibson, Goldie Hawn; dir. John Badham. 110m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc no list price. LV \$34.98. MCA/Universal. V image: good.

I LOVE YOU TO DEATH

1990. Kevin Kline, Tracy Ullman, William Hurt; dir. Lawrence Kasdan. 97m. (R) Hi ss cc \$92.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

MYSTERY TRAIN

1989. Nicoletta Braschi, Joe Strummer, Screamin' Jay Hawkins; dir. Jim Jarmusch. 110m. (R) Hi ss cc \$79.98. Orion. V image: good.

CADILLAC MAN

1990. Robin Williams, Tim Robbins, An-

from the killers, which sets into motion *Private Benjamin* meets *Lethal Weapon*. You get the idea: Mel Gibson takes enough punishment to kill 20 men and laughs it off, while Goldie Hawn worries more about chipped nails than flying bullets.

Director John Badham (*Saturday Night Fever*, *Stakeout*) does manage to keep plenty of bullets flying, as is his specialty. The action is fast-paced enough to keep the formula plot within a step or two of audience expectations. *Bird on a Wire* is a simple formula picture, but it has no pretensions to being anything more, and its stars can carry it for what it's worth.

Even big stars cannot always save a picture, as *I Love You to Death* and *Cadillac Man* prove. First, *I Love You to Death* has Academy-Award winning actor Kevin Kline playing such a broad caricature of a human being, it makes his role in *A Fish Called Wanda* seem subtle. Pizza man Joey Boca is a real womanizer, a Lothario for the anchovy set, and his wife, Rosalie (Tracy Ullman), is so in love she is blind to his actions. "I'm Italian," he rationalizes, "I have lots of hormones in my body." When asked what kind of marriage he could have with this philosophy, he explains, "It's a good marriage. I buy the food and she cooks it." That's fine with Rosalie until she accidentally sees her husband with another woman.

continued from page 98

nabella Sciorra; dir. Roger Donaldson. 97m. (R) Hi ss cc \$94.98. Orion. V image: good.



Night Shift: Cinque Lee and Screamin' Jay Hawkins behold life in a *Mystery Train* hotel.

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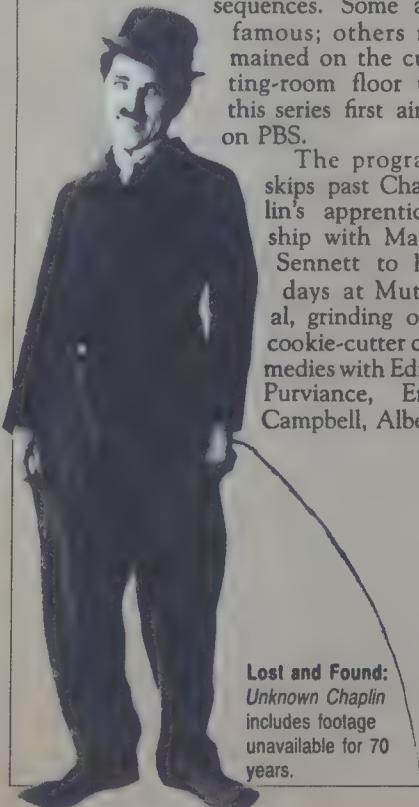
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Special Interest

Actor, director, producer, comedian, composer, dancer, stunt man, blithe spirit: Charlie Chaplin wore a lot of hats, and thanks to *Unknown Chaplin*, a documentary series compiled by Kevin Brownlow and David Gill, students of film history and anyone who appreciates a spectacle can watch him don and doff these hats, one by one. James Mason's narration and a rich, sensitive orchestral score take turns accompanying highlights and outtakes covering most of Chaplin's career. Some of the outtakes hadn't been seen in 70 years—and only thanks to the rank insubordination of studio underlings who refused to consign them to the flames do they reappear, miraculously, in this astonishing three-volume series.

"Volume 1: My Happiest Years" paints a portrait of an instinctively improvisatory artist in rare filmstock so rich in gray scale—never having been recopied—that it could have been shot yesterday. Chaplin thought nothing of rehearsing on film, often shooting dozens or even hundreds of takes for a scene, using the rushes to refine brilliant sequences. Some are famous; others remained on the cutting-room floor till this series first aired on PBS.

The program skips past Chaplin's apprenticeship with Mack Sennett to his days at Mutual, grinding out cookie-cutter comedies with Edna Purviance, Eric Campbell, Albert



Lost and Found:
Unknown Chaplin
includes footage unavailable for 70 years.



Running on Empty: Patrick McGoohan runs for office in a scene from *The Prisoner Video Companion*.

Austin and other collaborators. Proceedings come to an end just as Chaplin joins First National, builds his own studio, and prepares to concentrate more on quality than quantity.

By today's standards, Chaplin arguably went too far. "Volume 2: The Great Director" demonstrates that he was a woefully inefficient filmmaker. Stuck for inspiration, he walked off the set of *The Gold Rush* and stayed off for months. Watching the obsessive genius at work reveals more neurotic perfectionism than he ever intended the public to see, yet there is wonder here, a continuous inventiveness that springs both from the genius of Chaplin and the selectiveness of the documentarians. Numerous interviews thicken the loosely biographical plot.

By "Volume 3: Hidden Treasures," the narration begins to fall silent for lengthy stretches of eloquent visual comedy from works both known (*Lime-light*, *Modern Times*, *City Lights*) and unknown (*The Professor*, *How to Make Movies*). In one of many memorable scenes that never made it to the big screen, Chaplin takes an army exam in silhouette. A doctor seems to jam a spoon all the way down his throat, then a pair of pliers—which apparently falls down Chaplin's gullet as the doc fran-

tically fishes to retrieve it. *Unknown Chaplin* is a cinematic motherlode.

The Prisoner Video Companion is something less than a full documentary and something more than an extended trailer devoted to Patrick McGoohan's *The Prisoner*. Learn how McGoohan turned down the role of James Bond to become the anti-Bond in his anti-authoritarian TV series of the late '60s. Testimony from McGoohan, his collaborators, and his contemporaries is glaringly absent, though a voice-over sprays dramatic highlights with equal parts useful anecdote, revealing interpretation and lame plot summary. The idealistic rads who wrote the commentary try their best to locate the 17 episodes' "subversive nature," but McGoohan's allegorical masterwork resists any ideology but a fierce, pure libertarianism. It answers nothing; it's more a procession of elaborately crafted questions, searing and surreal.

Vienna 1900 was produced in association with the Pompidou Center in

continued on page 100

REVIEWED

UNKNOWN CHAPLIN

Comp. 1983. Vol. 1: "My Happiest Years." Vol. 2: "The Great Director." Vol. 3: "Hidden Treasures." Charlie Chaplin; nar. James Mason; writ./prod. Kevin Brownlow, David Gill. 55m each. Hi \$19.99/vol., \$39.99/set. HBO. V image: good.

THE PRISONER VIDEO COMPANION

1990. Patrick McGoohan. 55m. Hi \$19.98. MPI. V image: excel.

VIENNA 1900

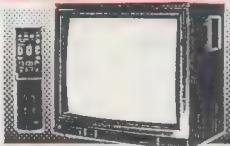
1986. Dir. Jean-Louis Fournier. 53m. Hi \$39.95. Home Vision. V image: excel.

LOST MAN'S RIVER

1989. Peter Matthiessen; dir. Noel Buckner, Rob Whittlesey. 56m. \$29.95. Mystic Fire. V image: good.

Art Attack:
Gustav Klimt's *Judith*
in the documentary
Vienna 1900.



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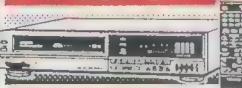
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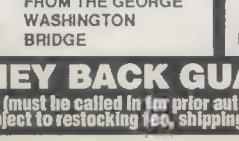
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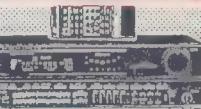
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Kidvid

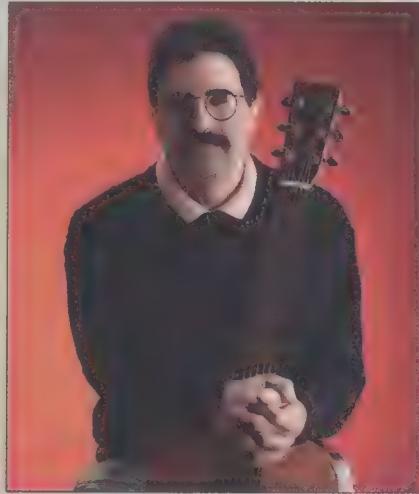
Music tapes remain a staple of the made-for-kidvid field. The highly repeatable nature of songs makes them a natural for a child's home video library and, especially for youngest viewers, the "bite-sized" length of the material doesn't snap short attention spans. As a bonus, willing parents can learn a few new tunes for lullaby time or travel diversion. This month's mixed bag of kidvid song collections arrived in pairs, and in almost every case, one title from each pair has a clear edge over the other.

One of the strongest series in original kidvid programming has been *Kidsongs*, an ongoing set of original music videos created by a team who've done promo clips for major rock acts. *Kidsongs* are low on glitz and high on youthful spirits, featuring a pleasant bunch of pre-teens lip-syncing to old favorites while zippy editing and kid-ready locations (a farm, a sports field, etc.) provide visual hooks.

Among the new *Kidsongs* titles, *A Day at Camp* is clearly superior, a straightforward trip to the open spaces, starting with the happy campers on a bus ride ("The More We Get Together") and ending with their own variety revue. Along the way, the kids do their thing to a bunch of old reliables including "On Top of Spaghetti" and "Little Bunny Foo-Foo" (did the fairy really say "I don't like your attitude?") and a campfire medley that, gratefully, does not include all 100 verses of "100 Bottles of



Something in the Air: Film and Broadway star John Lithgow strums through *Kid-Sized Concert*.



Pennsylvania Piper: Pittsburgh-based Frank Cappelli's songs typify the best in music for kids.

Pop on the Wall." The kids and situations are cute, but not gaggingly so, and little touches, like the use of wild animal footage in a hiking sequence, display the extra attention that makes *Kidsongs* such a success.

Too bad *Ride the Rollercoaster* didn't opt for the same tried-and-true formula. Its premise has instant kid-appeal — tape the gang as they cut loose on the rides in a Magic Mountain amusement park (two obvious plugs are no doubt a pay-back for use of the facilities). An early number, "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," is sung with great you-are-there camera angles on three different roller-coasters, and makes for a rousing start. Unfortunately, the show then veers off into lame musical vignettes that reinforce negative behavior. Do we really need an ode to fast food that shows the kids stuffing their faces with junk, or another battle of the sexes played to "Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better"? The nadir is a version of "Little Deuce Coupe" set against a bumper car challenge in retro '50s gear, the girls preening passively in poodle skirts while the boys play little greasers.

The *Kidsongs* kids are at their most appealing as a musical mob with no featured players but this tape makes the mistake of bringing a few kids front and center and (big mistake) asking them to "act." This only accentuates Valley Kid stage brat tendencies. A shame, really,

since the action sequences, like that on the water rides, or "Splish Splash" done to water diving and porpoise acts, work so well. The best part of the tape, in fact, is the end credit sequence when the music plays over thrilling P.O.V. camera shots from the front car of a rollercoaster — and there's not a kid in sight!

As with big-budget theatrical releases, "sequelmania" can take a good idea and run it into the ground. That seems to be the case with another successful kidvid series, *Babysongs*. The original *Babysongs* and its companion, *More Babysongs*, feature delightful original tunes set to simple live action sequences with occasional animation or puppetry. The song titles, like "Today I Took My Diapers Off" or "Mommy Comes Back," may sound pretty tedious to an adult listener, but they relate to toddler concerns in a direct, comforting way, and the simplicity of emotion and

continued on page 106



REVIEWED

KIDSONGS

1990. "A Day at Camp" (29m.), "Ride the Rollercoaster" (27m.). \$14.95 ea. View-Master/Warner. Ages: 2-10. V image: good.

EVEN MORE BABY SONGS

1990. 32m. \$14.98. Hi-Tops. Ages: 1-6. V image: good.

BABY SONGS PRESENTS

JOHN LITHGOW'S KID-SIZED CONCERT
1990. John Lithgow. 32m. \$14.98. Hi-Tops. Ages: 2-6. V image: good.

FRANK CAPPELLI & COMPANY

1990. "Slap Me Five," "All Aboard The Train." Frank Cappelli. 30m. ea. tktk ea. A&M. Ages: 2-7. V image: good.

SESAME SONGS

1990. "Sing Yourself Silly," "Monster Hits." 30m. ea. \$14.95. Random House. Ages: 2-7. V image: good.

Directory

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Back to the Future Part III

1990. Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Mary Steenburgen, Thomas F. Wilson; dir. Robert Zemeckis. Sure, *Part II* was a let-down, but why did so many critics also deride this well-crafted wrap-up to the time-travel trilogy? Not inspired, but certainly entertaining. 118m. (PG) ss cc no list price. MCA/Universal.

Bird on a Wire

1990. Mel Gibson, Goldie Hawn, Keith Carradine; dir. John Badham. Relocated federal witness (Gibson) meets an old flame (Hawn), and together they flee some nasty government agents. Ludicrous, gratingly sexist cross-country farce, composed entirely of cribbs from other films. 113m. (R) ss cc no list price. MCA/Universal.

Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt

1989. Nar. Dustin Hoffman; co-pr./dir. Robert Epstein, Jeffrey Friedman. How family and friends coped with deaths of five people who had AIDS. Shattering documentary, Oscar-winner for year's best. 79m. (NR) \$25.00; proceeds will be donated. HBO.

The Gods Must Be Crazy II

1990. N!Xau, Lena Farugia, Hans Strydom; wr./dir. Jamie Uys. And you'd be crazy to rent this dog—which adds sexism to the first film's already-offensive brew of pa-



Genius of Jazz: Composer and pianist Thelonious Monk's remarkable talent shines in *Straight, No Chaser*.

tronizing, racist slapstick shtick. 98m. (PG) ss cc \$89.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Guardian

1990. Jenny Seagrove, Dwier Brown, Carey Lowell; dir. William Friedkin. Evil nanny. Okay chiller delivers only the requisite shocks. 92m. (R) ss cc \$92.95. MCA/Universal.

Labels For Less



Tamara Dobson as Cleopatra Jones

You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll get a bargain with four \$19.95 reissues from **RCA/Columbia**: outstanding comedies *Tootsie* and *Holiday* (with Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant), plus the sober biblical epic *Barabbas* and supreme TV-movie tear-jerker *Brian's Song*.

CBS/Fox rounds up five winners and a dud in a \$19.98-per-title "Critics' Choice" package that includes *Working Girl*, *Say Anything* (a real charmer starring John Cusack), *A Room with a View*, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, *M*A*S*H* and, last and definitely least, Goldie Hawn as a wild-west hooker in *The Duchess and the Dirtwater Fox* (a frontier *Pretty Woman* it ain't).

A "Jazz Ensemble" from **Warner** puts the mo' better price of \$19.98 on feature films *Bird*, *Round Midnight*, *The Gib*, *Pete Kelly's Blues* (with its original stereo soundtrack remixed for Dolby Surround), and *Young Man with a Horn*. Other's may prefer **Warner's** "Rough 'n' Ready" promotion, featuring *The Sea Wolves*, *Victory*, *Instant Justice*, *Above the Law*, *Cleopatra Jones*, *Cleopatra Jones and the Casino of Gold* (yes, it was made long before the *Indiana Jones* series), *The D.I.* and *Bloodsport*, plus martial-arts titles *Kung Fu*, *The Yakuza*, *Enter the Dragon* and *The Big Brawl*.

—SD

Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer

1986 (released '89). Michael Rooker, Tom Towles, Tracy Arnold; co-wr., dir. John McNaughton. Documentary-style character study portrays assault and murder in sickeningly realistic fashion, to no discernible dramatic end. 90m. NR (released unrated when distributor could not overturn MPAA's X rating). \$79.98. MPI.

High Fidelity

1989. Dir. Allan Miller. First-rate documentary about Guarneri String Quartet examines how quarrelsome relationships offstage fuel group's artistry in performance. 85m. V only. \$39.95. New Yorker.

Jetsons: The Movie

1990. Anim. Voices of Mel Blanc, Tiffany; pr./dir. William Hanna, Joseph Barbera. George and family halt an environmentally unsafe mining operation. Stick with the TV reruns. 82m. (G) ss cc \$22.95. LV \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

Man of Marble

1972; released '77. Jerzy Radziwilowicz, Krystyna Janda; dir. Andrzej Wajda. Student filmmaker in Poland retraces life of a '50s bricklayer first lionized, then vilified by the government. Remarkable drama's theatrical debut was long delayed by censorship battles with Polish authorities. 160m. sub. let. V only. \$79.95. New Yorker.

Thelonious Monk: Straight, No Chaser

1989. Color/B&W. Nar. Samuel E. Wright; co-pr., dir. Charlotte Zwerin. Acclaimed documentary shows jazz giant in performance and on the road in New York, Atlanta and Europe, ca. 1968. 90m. (PG-13) cc \$89.95. LV \$29.98 Warner.

Pretty Woman

1990. Julia Roberts, Richard Gere, Hector Elizondo, Laura San Giacomo, Ralph Bellamy; dir. Garry Marshall. Executive hires prostitute to be his escort for the week and falls in love. Reprehensible premise made utterly charming by droll Gere, drop-dead-attractive Roberts. 117m. (R) ss cc \$19.99. Touchstone.

Q & A

1990. Nick Nolte, Timothy Hutton, Armand Assante; wr./dir. Sidney Lumet. Portrait of New York City's police force as a cauldron of ethnic hatred. Nolte, playing a corrupt cop under investigation, excels despite muddled script. 132m. (R) ss cc \$92.99. HBO.

Rachel and the Stranger

1948. B&W. Loretta Young, Robert Mitchum, William Holden; dir. Norman Foster. Visiting Indian scout (Mitchum) sparks

See next page for key to abbreviations.

DIRECTORY

jealousy in unappreciative husband (Holden). Chestnut from the RKO studio, a pleasant mix of romance, music, comedy and western action. 79m. \$19.98. Turner.

The Spider's Stratagem

1969. Alida Valli, Giulio Brogi; dir. Bernardo Bertolucci. Moody, intricate political whodunit filmed for Italian TV, based on Jorge Luis Borges story about a man who investigates his father's murder. Ultimately incoherent, but dazzlingly photographed by Vittorio Storaro. 97m. sub. V only. \$59.95. New Yorker.

Stanley & Iris

1990. Jane Fonda, Robert De Niro; dir. Martin Ritt. Corny drama of adult illiteracy benefits from De Niro's fine, subtle performance. 104m. (PG-13) ss cc \$89.98. MGM/UA.

Stroszek

1977. Bruno S., Eva Mattes, Clemens Scheitz; dir. Werner Herzog. Three down-and-out Germans journey to midland America. Oddball comic odyssey, evidently one of the inspirations for Jim Jarmusch's *Mystery Train*. 108m. sub. V only. \$79.95. New Yorker.

Tales from the Darkside: The Movie

1990. Deborah Harry, Christian Slater, David Johansen, William Hickey, James Remar, Rae Dawn Chong; dir. John Harrison. Variable horror omnibus, strictly for buffs.

Strongest segment features Remar as artist who strikes regrettable bargain with goyle-like creature. 93m. (R) ss cc B \$29.95 V \$92.95. Paramount.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

1990. Judith Hoag, Elias Koteas; dir. Steve Barron. Make that Ninja Turkeys. Witless, grimy-looking live-action feature spun off from popular comic books and cartoon TV series. 95m. (PG) ss cc \$24.99. Family.

That Obscure Object of Desire

1977. Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, Angela Molina; dir. Luis Bunuel. Frenchman

in love with Spanish woman who continually spurns him—otherwise "you wouldn't love me any more," she reasons. Moments of wry insight outnumber lulls in director's final film. 103m. (R) LV let. sub. dig. \$49.95. Criterion.

Vital Signs

1990. Adrian Pasdar, Diane Lane, William Devane, Norma Aleandro, Jimmy Smits, Laura San Giacomo; dir. Marisa Silver. Serviceable med-student melodrama follows six students through rigors of internship. 102m. (R) ss cc \$89.98. CBS/Fox. ▶

PROGRAM LEGEND

DATE

Varies according to type of program.

Films: original theatrical release.

Made-for-broadcast: first telecast.

Made-for-video: first release in any format.

Compilations: production of collected work.

FORMAT

All tape programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted.

B: Beta cassette

V: VHS cassette

8: 8mm cassette

LV: videodisc in

CLV or

CAV format.

AUDIO

All available info is provided. Tapes generally have Hi-Fi tracks; discs are CX encoded.

St: stereo

ss: Dolby surround

stereo

cc: closed-captioned

IMAGE RATING

For theatrical releases, ratings of **excel.**, **good**, **fair** and **poor** refer to transfer quality and visual appearance; for non-theatrical programs, to overall visual quality.

ETCETERA

Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, X) are noted when available. All programs are in color unless noted.

anim: animated

B&W: black & white

cas: videocassette

comp.: compilation
czd.: colorized
dig.: digital
dir.: directed by
dub.: dubbed
let.: letterboxed
m.: minutes
n.a.: not available
nar.: narrated by
NR: not rated
pr.: produced by
RE: reissue
sim.: simulated
Sp.: Spanish
sub.: subtitled
TVM: made for television
wr.: written by
2ap: second audio channel

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DIRECTORY

SCIENCE FICTION/HORROR

All New Tales from the Crypt

1990 comp. 3 episodes from cable-TV horror omnibus based on '50s horror comics. "Only Skin Deep": Leah Thompson; dir. Howard Deutch. "Lover Come Hack to Me": Amanda Plummer; dir. Tom Holland. "Collection Completed": M. Emmet Walsh, Audra Lindley; dir. Mary Lambert. 87m. (NR; mature) ss cc V only. \$89.99. HBO.

Brain Dead

1990. Bill Pullman, Bill Paxton, Bud Cort; dir. Adam Simon. Clients at "New You" memory-revision clinic wind up lobotomized. 85m. (R) ss \$79.98. MGM/UA.

The Fearless Vampire Killers, or Pardon Me, But Your Teeth Are in My Neck

1967. Jack MacGowran, Roman Polanski, Sharon Tate, Alfie Bass; dir. Polanski. A comic rewrite of Dracula that suffered heavy editing and re-dubbing when first released in U.S.; video version restores cut footage, orig. dialogue tracks. 111m. (NR) \$19.98. MGM/UA.

The First Power

1990. Lou Diamond Phillips, Tracy Griffith, Jeff Kober; wr./dir. Robert Resnikoff. Convicted serial killer's execution unleashes equally murderous psychic entity. 98m. (R) ss cc \$89.98. Nelson.

House of Dark Shadows

1970. Jonathan Frid, Grayson Hall, Kathryn Leigh Scott, Joan Bennett; dir. Dan Curtis. First of two features sparked by soap-opera series: Vampire Barnabas seeks mortality so that he can marry. 98m. (PG) \$19.98. MGM/UA.

The Monster of Piedras Blancas

1958. B&W. Les Tremayne, Forrest Lewis, John Harmon; dir. Irvin Berwick. Hungry undersea creature becomes fisher—and eater—of men. 72m. \$14.98. Republic.

Night of Dark Shadows

1971. David Selby, Lara Parker, Kate Jackson, Grayson Hall; dir. Dan Curtis. Dismal sequel dumps bulk of series' original characters. 95m. (PG) \$19.98. MGM/UA.

Planet Earth

1974. TVM. John Saxon, Janet Margolin, Ted Cassidy, Diana Muldaur; wr. Gene Roddenberry, Juanita Bartlett; dir. Marc Daniels. Future ruled by women who subjugate men. 74m. \$59.95. Unicorn.

Playroom

1990. Chris McDonald, James Purcell, Vincent Schiavelli; dir. Manny Coto. Archaeologist uncovers haunted tomb. 87m. (R) ss (Ultra-stereo) \$89.98. Republic.

Satan's Princess

1990. Robert Forster, Lydie Denier, Caren

Kaye; pr./dir. Bert I. Gordon. Missing-person case leads investigator to siren with occult powers. 90m. (R) St cc B \$29.95 V no retail price. Paramount.

COMEDY

Ghosts Can't Do It

1990. Bo Derek, Anthony Quinn, Leo Damiani, Don Murray; wr./dir. John Derek. Dead billionaire's ghost (Quinn) returns to his wife (Derek) in body of a well-built thief. A cast and premise to make camp fans rejoice! 95m. (R) ss cc V only. \$89.95. RCA/Columbia.

Loose Cannons

1990. Gene Hackman, Dan Aykroyd, Dom DeLuise, Ronny Cox, Nancy Travis; co-wr., dir. Bob Clark. Mismatched undercover cops take case CIA couldn't crack. 94m. (R) ss cc \$89.95. RCA/Columbia.

Nightlife

1989. Maryam d'Abo, Ben Cross, Keith Szarabajka; dir. Daniel Taplitz. Vampiress quits life in the ghastly lane for a doctor, but soon bloodsucking ex-lover interferes. 93m. (PG-13) \$79.95. MCA.

S*P*Y*

1974. Donald Sutherland, Elliott Gould, Zouzou, Joss Ackland; dir. Irvin Kershner. KGB wants two CIA agents killed ASAP. 87m. (PG) \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

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DIRECTORY

Vice Academy Part 2

1990. Linnea Quigley, Ginger Lynn Allen, Jayne Hamil, Scott Layne; wr./pr./dir. Rick Sloane. Female cops foil villainess plotting to spike water supply with aphrodisiac. 93m. (R) St B \$29.95 V no retail price. Prism.

DRAMA

The Battleship Potemkin

1925. B&W. Wr./dir. Sergei Eisenstein. Seminal account of mutiny at Odessa in 1905 Russian revolution. Silent with score by Dimitri Shostakovich. 74m. \$29.95. White Star.

The Blood of Others

1984. Jodie Foster, Michael Ontkean, Sam Neill, Stephane Audran; dir. Claude

Chabrol. Badly miscast made-for-cable feature stars Foster and Ontkean as lovers in French WW II resistance movement. Neill as blackmailing German. 130m. B \$29.95 V no retail price. Prism (RE).

Camille Claudel

1989. Isabelle Adjani, Gerard Depardieu, Alain Cuny; dir. Bruno Nuytten. Sculptress becomes student and mistress to August Rodin. 149m. (R) sub. \$79.98. Orion.

Ivan the Terrible, Parts One and Two

1943, 1946. B&W with color sequence. Nikolai Cherkassov, Serafina Birman; wr./dir. Sergei Eisenstein. Ponderous but brilliantly filmed account of 16th-century czar's rise, overthrow and return to power. Score by Prokofiev. 99m., 85m. sub. \$29.95 ea. White Star.

Love at Large

1990. Tom Berenger, Elizabeth Perkins, Anne Archer, Ann Magnuson, Kate Capshaw; wr./dir. Alan Rudolph. Berenger plays a hoarse, deep-voiced detective in this homage to private-eye flicks of the '40s. 97m. (R) ss cc \$89.98. Orion.

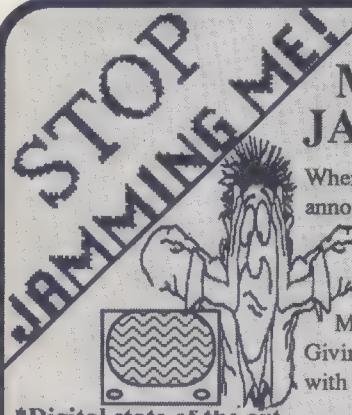
Scandalous

1988. Albert Fortell, Lauren Hutton, Capucine; dir. Robert W. Young. Nephew tracks down wealthy uncle's missing secretary. 90m. B \$29.95 V no retail price. Prism (RE).

Seduced

1984 TVM. Cybill Shepherd, Gregory Harrison, Adrienne Barbeau, Jose Ferrer; dir. Jerry Freedman. CEO under fire when former mistress marries a rival executive. ▶

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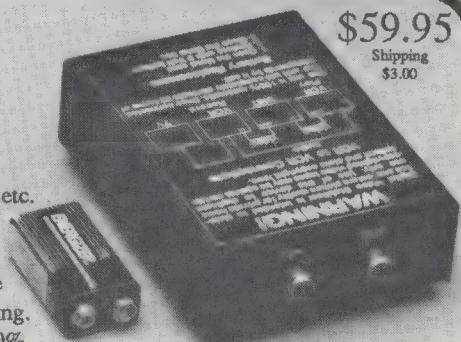
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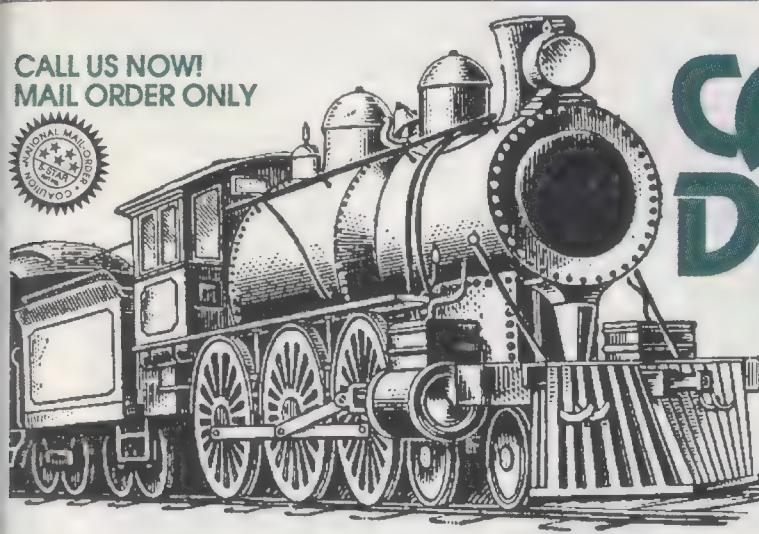
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Bugs Bunny's Festival of Fun

1990 comp. Anim. New-to-video cartoons "Wacky Wabbit" (1942), "The Wabbit Who Came to Supper" (42) plus "Hare Ribbin'," "Baseball Bugs," "Rhapsody Rabbit." 45m. \$12.98. MGM/UA.

Bugs Bunny's Greatest Hits

1990 comp. Anim. Cartoons released in earlier video compilations: "Slick Hare," "Bugs Bunny and the Three Bears," "Bugs Bunny Gets the Boid," "Gorilla My Dreams," "The Big Snooze." 45m. \$12.98. MGM/UA.

Greatest Adventure Stories from the Bible: Joseph and His Brothers

1990. Anim. Voices of Barry Bostwick, William Schallert. 10th in series of adaptations. Approx. 30m. cc \$14.95. Hanna-Barbera.

Here Comes Droopy!

1990 comp. Anim. Dir. Tex Avery. Droll, deadpan pooch in "Dixieland Droopy," "Droopy's Double Trouble," "Three Little Pups," "Senor Droopy," "Droopy Leprechaun," "Daredevil Droopy." 45m. \$12.98. MGM/UA.

Pink Panther Cartoon Festival: Pink at First Sight

1990 comp. TV short "Pink at First Sight," plus theatrical cartoons "Psychedelic Pink," "Super Pink," "The Hand Is Pinker Than the Eye," "Pink Pranks." Anim. 45m. \$12.98. MGM/UA.

VIDEODISCS

The Clockmaker

1974. Philippe Noiret, Jean Rochefort; dir. Bertrand Tavernier. Drama. 100m. sub. dig. \$34.95. LumiVision.

The Cocoanuts

1929. B&W. The Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont. Comedy. 93m. dig. \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

The Comedy of Terrors/The Oblong Box

1964 '69. Vincent Price, Peter Lorre, Boris Karloff, Christopher Lee. Comedy/horror double feature. 175m. dig. \$59.95. Image.

The Dirty Dozen

1967. Lee Marvin, Charles Bronson. Action. Includes trailer. 150m. St. dig. let. 3 sides. \$39.98. MGM/UA.

The Guardian See Highlights. ss cc \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

Monty Python's Flying Circus, Vols. 5-6.

1970-1973; 1990 comps. Comedy. 60m. ea. \$29.95 ea. Paramount.

On the Town

1950. Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Betty Gar-

rett. Musical. Remastered edition includes short *Mighty Manhattan*, *New York's Wonder City*. 98m. dig. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

Queen Christina

1933. B&W. Greta Garbo, John Gilbert. Drama. Includes trailer. 100m. dig. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

COMEDY

continued from page 86

Bent on revenge, she enlists the help of an overpopulated cast of kookie characters: her bizarre mother (Joan Plowright), her New Age friend Devo (River Phoenix), who's always felt she deserved better, and a couple of imbecilic burnouts named Harlan and Marlon (William Hurt and Keanu Reeves). They try to kill Joey, only to discover that he's a modern-day Rasputin.

After several attempts fail miserably, mother and daughter feed him enough poisoned spaghetti to finish off the Italian army, with the effect of making him slightly drowsy. Devo tries shooting Boca in the head, causing him to suffer...a little headache. Desperate, they convince Harlan and Marlon to shoot the indestructible man in the heart. After we are forced to sit through a protracted scene of the two inept hit men bumping into each other and debating over which side the victim's heart is on, Joey Boca's not the only one left with a headache. We expect more from director Lawrence Kasden (*The Big Chill*, *The Accidental Tourist*).

Robin Williams' character in *Cadillac Man*, Joey O'Brien, is very similar to Kline's Joey Boca. O'Brien is a philandering car salesman who has more women than he (or the script) knows what to do with. The first part of the movie is filled with one fast-talking encounter after another, as he tries to juggle demands made on him by an ex-wife, a daughter, two mistresses and a loan shark, not to mention the boss who's going to fire him if he doesn't sell enough cars during the upcoming sale.

Suddenly, during this big sale, Larry (Tim Robbins) busts into the dealership, holding everyone at gunpoint until he can determine who's been sleeping with his wife. This presents O'Brien with an opportunity to put his sleazy, manipulative talent to noble use by trying to "sell" Larry the idea that he must give up.

It's possible to make a wonderful film out of character sketches as in *Mystery Train*, or to entertain using a lot of action and the right cast (*Bird on a Wire*), but *I Love You to Death* and *Cadillac Man* constitute little more than a warning: Beware of "character-driven" farce.

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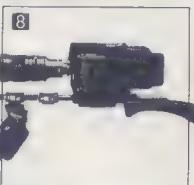


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DRAMA

continued from page 80

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Hare's rather ordinary story idea is really a carrier for his ideas about the textures of human lives. The emotions aroused by Lillian's ill-fated affair change the way she looks at her life and work; her sister, who cleans up her own act, leads the way.

There is also political material, having to do with the Thatcher government's dismantling of the people-oriented British health system which had attracted Lillian to London in the first place. This is kept in a human context, and the characters are fully formed and superbly acted. *Strapless* makes a convincing case that people can change, and if they do they can change the world.

In A Shock to the System Michael Caine plays an executive who decides that the best way to change his own life

is with a few carefully planned accidents. This wickedly amoral thriller has more intentional laughs than most comedies. Its terrific cast plows into the material with gusto—Peter Riegert and Swoosie Kurtz seem to have as much fun playing people practically begging to be murdered as Caine has in obliging them.

Miami Blues deals with a couple of fellows who are equally good at sniffing out trouble, the charming Junior (Alec Baldwin) and the grizzled, potbellied Hoke (Fred Ward). The big difference is that Hoke is a veteran Miami homicide detective and Junior is a career sociopath who, smelling Hoke on his tail, bushwhacks him and steals his gun, badge, handcuffs and false teeth. He then uses the first three to assume his identity.

This is seamy-side crime drama, laced with dark humor and directed by George Armitage in a plain, unemphatic style. Armitage has enough confidence in his material and cast to avoid heavy mannerisms. Ward and Baldwin reward him handsomely with their performances, but Jennifer Jason Leigh, as Junior's sweetie, steals the picture from both of them. ■

SPECIAL INTEREST

continued from page 88

Paris and purports to be "the recollections of a Viennese girl in Paris." However, the essences of both the girl and Vienna itself remain obscure while the documentary proceeds about its real business—the art, architecture and literature of Vienna at the turn of the century. Included is everything from the revolutionary introspections of Sigmund Freud and the fearsome self-portraits of Egon Schiele to the atonal chamber music of Arnold Schoenberg. Much is made of the romantic city's "artificiality," but this seems to be merely an excuse not to probe deeper beneath its ornate surface. Despite rushes of constantly surprising visual beauty, the program dies of a musty museum-like preciousness.

Lost Man's River sets writer and Zen naturalist Peter Matthiessen adrift in the everglades of Florida. Excerpts from Matthiessen's new book *Killing Mr. Watson*—based on the life of the outlaw Edgar "Bloody" Watson—alternate with Matthiessen musing before the camera about this "place of uncommon beauty" ■

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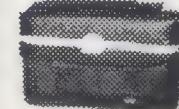
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an extensive and successful campaign to win her over. But she learns what we already suspected—that he's too good to be true—soon after her randy, irresponsible kid sister (Bridget Fonda) informs her that she's pregnant.

Hare's rather ordinary story idea is really a carrier for his ideas about the textures of human lives. The emotions aroused by Lillian's ill-fated affair change the way she looks at her life and work; her sister, who cleans up her own act, leads the way.

There is also political material, having to do with the Thatcher government's dismantling of the people-oriented British health system which had attracted Lillian to London in the first place. This is kept in a human context, and the characters are fully formed and superbly acted. *Strapless* makes a convincing case that people can change, and if they do they can change the world.

In A Shock to the System Michael Caine plays an executive who decides

is with a few carefully planned accidents. This wickedly amoral thriller has more intentional laughs than most comedies. Its terrific cast plows into the material with gusto—Peter Riegert and Swoosie Kurtz seem to have as much fun playing people practically begging to be murdered as Caine has in obliging them.

Miami Blues deals with a couple of fellows who are equally good at sniffing out trouble, the charming Junior (Alec Baldwin) and the grizzled, potbellied Hoke (Fred Ward). The big difference is that Hoke is a veteran Miami homicide detective and Junior is a career sociopath who, smelling Hoke on his tail, bushwhacks him and steals his gun, badge, handcuffs and false teeth. He then uses the first three to assume his identity.

This is seamy-side crime drama, laced with dark humor and directed by George Armitage in a plain, unemphatic style. Armitage has enough confidence in his material and cast to avoid heavy mannerisms. Ward and Baldwin reward him handsomely with their performances, but Jennifer Jason Leigh, as Junior's *sweatie*, steals the picture from

SPECIAL INTEREST

continued from page 88

Paris and purports to be "the recollections of a Viennese girl in Paris." However, the essences of both the girl and Vienna itself remain obscure while the documentary proceeds about its real business—the art, architecture and literature of Vienna at the turn of the century. Included is everything from the revolutionary introspections of Sigmund Freud and the fearsome self-portraits of Egon Schiele to the atonal chamber music of Arnold Schoenberg. Much is made of the romantic city's "artificiality," but this seems to be merely an excuse not to probe deeper beneath its ornate surface. Despite rushes of constantly surprising visual beauty, the program dies of a musty museum-like preciousness.

Lost Man's River sets writer and Zen naturalist Peter Matthiessen adrift in the everglades of Florida. Excerpts from Matthiessen's new book *Killing Mr. Watson*—based on the life of the outlaw Edgar "Bloody" Watson—alternate with Matthiessen musing before the camera about this "place of uncommon beauty."

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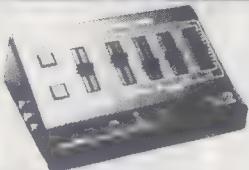
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continued from page 100
and evil and darkness."

It helps that he's a natural storyteller, and he's found perfect material in the legendary Watson — possibly even a Zen soulmate through Watson's eminently practical fatalism. According to the author, Watson once said, "I don't look for trouble, but when trouble comes to me, I take care of it." Unnerving finale: Matthiessen affectionately strokes a captured croc.

KIDVID

continued from page 90

melody are totally engaging.

Though I haven't seen the third in the series, *Turn On The Music, Even More Babysongs* seems to indicate that this well is running dry. With the exception of "I Can Put My Clothes On By Myself," the songs here feel like retreads of past efforts, rehashing the ideas of bathtime fun or the love of a favorite toy. The delight of familiarity has given way to the boredom of predictability. Also, am I just getting more jaded, or is there more cloying cuteness at work here, too?

Still, *Even More Babysongs* beats its companion piece, *Babysongs Presents John Lithgow's Kid-Sized Concert*. This is no mere vanity piece — Lithgow is a sterling actor with a fine voice and a dramatic storyteller's flair. Why shouldn't an Academy Award-nominated actor put his all into barnyard animal noises? Trouble is, Lithgow's talents are dynamited by a deplorable editing job. You generally don't notice editing at all, but when it's done this badly, it's like trying to watch TV while some annoying neighbor keeps jabbing your elbow and screaming, "Look at this!"

While Lithgow sings, the camera jumps around his small, somewhat distracted audience. The reaction shots don't fit the music and the effect is totally unsettling. (Were they filmed out of sequence? Did something go wrong?) Also disorienting is the fact that Lithgow sings solo, accompanying himself on acoustic guitar, yet there's a full-band backup and musical sweetening throughout. The makers of this tape seemed to have lost faith in Lithgow's ability to hold an audience (the occasional live-action and animated drop-ins reinforce that belief). Calling this choppy mess a concert is a misnomer. It's more of a hatchet job.

Unless you live in the Pittsburgh area, you probably don't know Frank Cappelli, but his is a name you should continue on page 120

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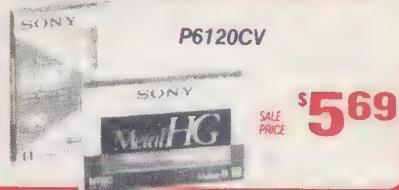
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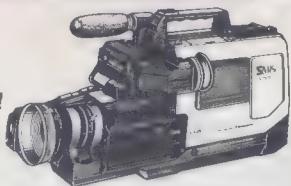
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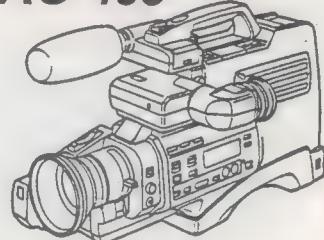
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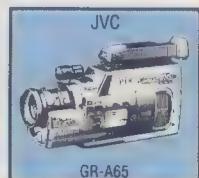
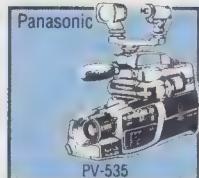
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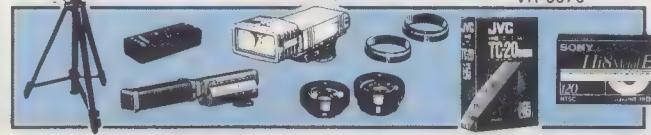
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JVC HRS5500U \$599
Super VHS 4-Head MTS Hifi
LCD remote, Digital Tracking
Advanced Editing Features

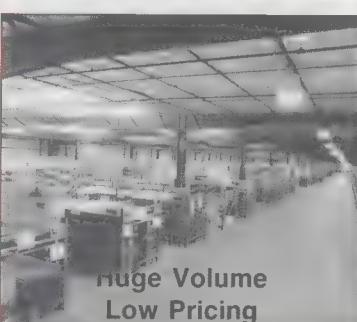
Sony Video **CALL!**
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MISC

JVC AV2080 \$358
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A/V Inputs, Channel Guard

JVC GRS70U \$896
Super VHS-C Camcorder
8X Zoom, Flying Erase Head
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Recoton Wireless 100's \$149 sys.
Cordless Add-on Speakers
12 Wt/Ch Amp, Extends
your stereo to any room.



Call For Demo Specials.

WDS 2417 W. Badger Road, Madison, WI 53713

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Some Items Closeouts • Some Limited Quantities.

The following pages contain advertisements for adult material. The section has been sealed as an accommodation to those readers who have no interest in such materials.

The entire section is perforated at the spine so that it can be removed.

To gain access to these pages, tear off the perforated outside edge.

ALL NEW 232 VIDEOS

ONLY

19¢

EACH IN QTY.

All Hardcore incredible but true, we represent the biggest producers of all adult hardcore video and quite frankly - we're willing to give our product away in hopes of attracting your future business. Seeing is believing and we're convinced that once you see the great product we have to offer, you'll become a regular buying customer. This is a one time offer - one order per household. Please.....SO ACT NOW! Each video is processed in high resolution Supervision with digitally processed sound and guaranteed uncensored. If for any reason you are dissatisfied with your purchase just return within 30 days for a prompt exchange, credit or refund minus P&H.



SEX POKE
 HUGE [REDACTED]
 SPREAD WIDE
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 HARD [REDACTED]
 TWIN LICKS
 RAM [REDACTED]
 LOIN LEAK
 CRAM [REDACTED]
 WET PANTIES
 BAD ACT
 ORAL SEX
 BIG KNOBS
 GREASE IT
 STUFF [REDACTED]
 JUICY HOLE
 THROAT JOB
 DRIPPING HOT
 SHAVED [REDACTED]
 PULLING [REDACTED]
 WET & WILD
 SUCKING [REDACTED]
 BIN [REDACTED]
 SEX STROKE
 DARK MEAT
 HARD 'N HOT
 STIX [REDACTED]
 PINK HOLES
 WETTER LOADS
 WET LOADS
 KEEP [REDACTED]
 LOADS [REDACTED]
 PORN ACTS
 SUCK MINE
 PINK [REDACTED]
 SEX PUMP
 SEX SACK
 TAKE IT ALL
 TRIPLE SEX
 HOT HUMP
 BLOWHARD
 LONGER [REDACTED]
 BUTT FUN
 SHOOTING IT
 STROKERS
 DIVE [REDACTED]
 DEEPERI

LOAD [REDACTED]
 OILED [REDACTED]
 HOT [REDACTED]
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 WET HUMP
 HOT LOAD
 DRIPPING
 FEST [REDACTED]
 HOT [REDACTED]
 BIG [REDACTED]
 SHOVE [REDACTED]
 NIPS AHOY
 ALL WET
 TEASE BUTT
 SEX [REDACTED]
 CLAM DIP
 OFF [REDACTED]
 DEEP STROKE
 OILED LIPS
 HEAD LOVE
 SIT [REDACTED]
 SHOOT JOB
 PIE [REDACTED]
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 WET LIPS
 GUSHING
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 HOT LICKS
 LICK 'EM ALL
 LEZ LICK
 HUGE LOADS
 FINGER [REDACTED]
 WET WOMB
 HOT [REDACTED]
 TITANIC [REDACTED]
 STICK [REDACTED]
 RUMP ROMP
 STUFFED
 BIG BOOBS
 GROUP [REDACTED]
 PINKY POKE
 SPURTS
 DEEP-N-HARD
 HUGE LOAD 2
 WET LICKS
 SKIN GAME
 RUMP [REDACTED]
 WET [REDACTED]
 PULL IT [REDACTED]
 PECKERS
 HOT [REDACTED]

3-WAY [REDACTED]
 LOAD [REDACTED]
 WET [REDACTED]
 BALL BUST [REDACTED]
 BIG [REDACTED]
 SHOVE [REDACTED]
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 SIT [REDACTED]
 SHOOT JOB
 PIE [REDACTED]
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 WET LIPS
 GUSHING
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 HOT LICKS
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 HOT [REDACTED]
 TITANIC [REDACTED]
 STICK [REDACTED]
 RUMP ROMP
 STUFFED
 BIG BOOBS
 GROUP [REDACTED]
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 DEEP-N-HARD
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 WET [REDACTED]
 PULL IT [REDACTED]
 PECKERS
 HOT [REDACTED]

BATH [REDACTED]
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 WET [REDACTED]
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 SHOVE [REDACTED]
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 SEX [REDACTED]
 CLAM DIP
 OFF [REDACTED]
 DEEP STROKE
 OILED LIPS
 HEAD LOVE
 SIT [REDACTED]
 SHOOT JOB
 PIE [REDACTED]
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 WET LIPS
 GUSHING
 SUCK [REDACTED]
 HOT LICKS
 LICK 'EM ALL
 LEZ LICK
 HUGE LOADS
 FINGER [REDACTED]
 WET WOMB
 HOT [REDACTED]
 TITANIC [REDACTED]
 STICK [REDACTED]
 RUMP ROMP
 STUFFED
 BIG BOOBS
 GROUP [REDACTED]
 PINKY POKE
 SPURTS
 DEEP-N-HARD
 HUGE LOAD 2
 WET LICKS
 SKIN GAME
 RUMP [REDACTED]
 WET [REDACTED]
 PULL IT [REDACTED]
 PECKERS
 HOT [REDACTED]

HOT [REDACTED]
 JETS [REDACTED]
 LONG & HARD [REDACTED]
 BALL ROLL [REDACTED]
 SKID MARKS [REDACTED]
 SWEET [REDACTED]
 BIG [REDACTED]
 DEEP BUTTS [REDACTED]
 WET CHICKS [REDACTED]
 ROUGH RIDE [REDACTED]
 SLICK [REDACTED]
 BLACK [REDACTED]
 HARD SHOT [REDACTED]
 HUNG GUYS [REDACTED]
 HARDONS [REDACTED]
 LOVING IT [REDACTED]
 SEX [REDACTED]
 BLACK [REDACTED]
 HOT SHOWER [REDACTED]
 DRIPPERS [REDACTED]
 FEST [REDACTED]
 WET LIPS [REDACTED]
 NOOKYING [REDACTED]
 GANG BANG [REDACTED]
 SUCKERS [REDACTED]
 MORE, MORE! [REDACTED]
 FINGER FUN [REDACTED]
 STAINED BED [REDACTED]
 SHOT [REDACTED]
 CLIMAX [REDACTED]
 SLICK [REDACTED]
 HUGE [REDACTED]
 LUSTY LOINS [REDACTED]
 HOT GUSHERS [REDACTED]
 SEX [REDACTED]
 SWEATY [REDACTED]
 WET SHOTS [REDACTED]
 MILKING IT [REDACTED]
 JOB [REDACTED]
 HARD [REDACTED]
 SEX MUSCLE [REDACTED]
 SPREADING [REDACTED]
 REAL LOVE [REDACTED]
 HARD MEAT [REDACTED]

CHECK OUT THESE UNBELIEVABLY LOW PRICES

ANY 25 FOR ONLY \$12
 ANY 100 FOR ONLY \$24

ANY 150 FOR ONLY \$36
 ALL 232 FOR ONLY \$44

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NEW SHOWCASE Dept. HXO

P.O. Box 5460

Chicago IL 60680-5460

Rush Name Indicated, I enclose \$ [REDACTED] plus \$5 P/H
 CASH CHECK MONEY ORDER
 As payment in full. Canadians remit in US funds only. No Foreign COD's COD, I enclose \$8 extra, plus P/H

Please specify format: BETA VHS

I am over 19 years old and request this material

 ADD \$2 for insurance and First Class Handling

Name [REDACTED]

Addr./ Apt# [REDACTED]

City [REDACTED]

State/Zip [REDACTED]

B-date/Sign- [REDACTED]

Age [REDACTED]

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1-800-874-8960 VIDEO ORDERS ONLY

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Add \$4 P/H on video purchases VHS BETA

NAME [REDACTED]

ADD. [REDACTED]

CITY [REDACTED]

ST./ZIP [REDACTED]

I am 18 yrs. or older & request this material

Signature [REDACTED]

B/day

FREE!
TWENTY VIDEOS
FOR YOUR NAME &
ADDRESS ALL YOU
PAY IS P&H
JUST \$9.95 TOTAL!



1. GIRL NEXT DOOR
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3. FIRST TIME
4. SEXY BREASTS
5. RIPE & JUICY
6. EBONY TEASE
7. EXHIBITIONISTS
8. PRIVATE AUDITIONS
9. ORIENTAL PLEASURES
10. DIRTY BLONDES
11. HOT BABES
12. PRIVATE PASSIONS
13. MIXED DOUBLES
14. BUTTIN' IN
15. G-SPOT LADIES
16. DOUBLE DOSE
17. SLOW STRIP
18. SEX MACHINE
19. SAPPHO SEX

JUST SEND \$9.95 FOR P&H TO:

STUDIO OFFER DEPT. HXO

P.O. BOX 5 Michigan City IN. 46360

 VHS BETA

ALL FOUR TOP-RATED VIDEOS FOR ONLY \$19.99! A \$199.00 VALUE!



THE SEARCH FOR PINK OCTOBER — **Kelly Royce, Sabrina Dawn and Rayne.** The Search is on and the action is hot! Meet Kelly Royce, the girl that goes down like a submarine! She's hot, willing and always ready to please! This brand new release will have you on the edge of your seat as the ladies do what they do best. It's into the deep blue with these beautiful bodies. Gorgeous newcomer Rayne steals the show. You'll see why! Time Approximate 1 Hour 5 Minutes.

Our **iron-clad guarantee** that comes with every purchase also applies to this special offer. It's simple. If you are not 100% delighted with your purchase just return it within 30 days for your money back. No questions asked! But we're sure that you will be more than pleased with each of the sexy videos starring the hottest names in the business. Place your order today and we'll also include a specially selected "mystery gift" along with our brand new color catalog filled with more of the best buys in adult video — ABSOLUTELY FREE!

Please note: Due to the extremely unusual nature of this offer we reserve the right to return any order, unopened, after the first 5,000 sets have been sold.



RED HOT — **Cameo, Danielle Steele and Ashley Dunne** in a real-life thriller packed with lots of red-hot sex! Imagine what would happen if the CIA and KGB stopped spying on each other long enough to become partners — in the war room and the bedroom! The answer is in this brand-new video release that is topical, sexy and a whole lot of fun! Find out if the Russian ladies are as open-minded about sex as the American gals! The answer may surprise you but you'll love it — guaranteed! Time Approximate 1 Hour 3 Minutes.

As part of a national advertising campaign to introduce you to our friendly, discreet and efficient video service we're making this unbeatable offer. For just \$19.99 we will ship to you all four of the full-length videos you see in this ad. We repeat. All 4 video features will be sent to you for just \$19.99! You'll receive **Kelly Royce** in "The Search For Pink October," **Paula Price** in "In The Can," **Nina Hartley** in "Blazing Mattresses" and **Cameo** in "Red Hot"! #8105



IN THE CAN — **Paula Price, Roxanna Ferre and Krisstarah Knight** in this sizzling new release. It's a steamy story of beautiful women, super-hung heroes and a killer plot! It involves a hack writer in the skin trade and a murder-mystery designed to further his career! Paula, Roxanna and Krisstarah are right in the middle of all of the action. You might get a little sidetracked once these lovely ladies reveal their wares but who cares! Time Approximate 1 Hour 5 Minutes.



BLAZING MATTRESSES — **Nina Hartley, Kelli Richards and Jerry Butler** in the second episode of the classic "Debbie Duz Dishes" episodes by Damon Christian! You may think the life of a suburban housewife is predictable and boring. Well, you obviously have never met our girl Debbie! Her place is always "open house" and she is the most accommodating hostess you've ever met. Sex in suburbia takes on a whole new meaning when Debbie comes to town! Time Approximate 1 Hour 5 Minutes.

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Sirs. I have enclosed my check. M.O. Visa. M.C. Information. Please rush me 4 videos under a 30-DAY MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE (CT res. add sales tax.)

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Signature _____
Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms. _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone # in case we have a _____ phone # _____
 MC Visa Exp. date _____
Account # _____
Bank or Org. issuing card _____
Total \$19.99
CT State _____
Tax _____
P & H \$3.00
Total _____
Enc. \$ _____

#8105

NOTE AVAILABLE IN
VHS ONLY
Video _____
Total \$19.99
CT State _____
Tax _____
P & H \$3.00
Total _____
Enc. \$ _____



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Each one hour tape is jammed full of the hottest & hardest sex imaginable! Choose from 212 of the most explicit videos ever filmed and they're yours for this unheard of price. We're convinced that when you see our great products & prices you'll order again & again. 60 minute cassettes packaged in their own boxes direct from the factory to you!

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If you are not delighted with your purchase, simply return for a credit, exchange, or refund (minus P&H).

ONLY

19¢
EA. IN QTY.

TICKLE YOUR FANCY HARD & HORNY
 IT'S SO BIG JERKING LOADS SHE LOVES IT HARD
 HEAD HUNGER NAKED NYMPHS SPREAD IT WIDE
 SIT ON IT SLICK CHICKS HOT [REDACTED]
 HOT [REDACTED] DEEP INSIDE VIXENS IN HEAT
 [REDACTED] ALL OVER KINKY COEDS THREE WAY
 TWIN [REDACTED] OFF EATER SHAVED CHICKS
 IT'S MY TURN LUSTING LOINS GETTING OFF BATTERING RAM
 [REDACTED] CRAZY SCREW MY [REDACTED] HOT [REDACTED]
 LEAKING LOINS FILL HER UP THAR SHE BLOWS DEEPEPI DEEPEPI!
 HARD & READY SILICON BOOBS WELCOME WAGON VIXENS OFF
 CHUNKY CHICKS BLONDE SANDWICH BEN WAH [REDACTED] SWEET CHEEKS
 BLONDE SEX BUTTIN IN REAR ENTRY TIGHT [REDACTED]
 SPURTS OF LOVE BLACK LEZ 3-SOME ALL THE WAY IN
 DRILL PINK [REDACTED] BACKSIDE BABES WET LIPS
 HOT BODS SHOOT YOUR STUFF FEEL ME UP HOT & PINK
 RUMP ROMP HORNY SLUTS DOWN MY POLE CHEERLEADERS
 SEX STROKES CLIMAXING [REDACTED] LESBOFEST MAKE ME [REDACTED]
 JUGGLING JUGGS PINK TUNNEL VOLCANIC LOADS [REDACTED] ATTACK
 WET SHOTS GROUP GROPE FEEL THE HEAT ENDLESS LOADS
 WET SHOTS POONFEST TOOLS OF THE TRADE ROUND ROUND
 PORN QUEENS BEACH BLANKET BANG TAKE MY LOAD SLAMMERS
 TEASE ME TAKE IT ALL BLACK STUDS BATH
 [REDACTED] PALS RAMMED REAMS LOVE SHOWERS SIZZLING TONGUE
 DOUBLE HEADER FINGER FANTASY JOBS ADULT FUN
 DEEP-N-HARD PETER EATERS BIG [REDACTED] NITE DEPOSITS
 [REDACTED] MY [REDACTED] LIP SERVICE KING SIZE THROBBIN [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] TO [REDACTED] TRIPLE SEX PLAY SUPER HEAD MILK MAIDS
 SOAK MY [REDACTED] FOUNTAINS OF LOVE SPREAD [REDACTED] MASSIVE MANHOOD
 SEX PACK CHOCOLATE PUDDING CREAMY OREO STROKERS WILD
 BI-BI LOVE KNOBS & KNOCKERS BLACKWHITE [REDACTED] RAMRODDERS
 CLAM DIP SAUNA SEX IN THE REAR HORNY HOUSEWIVES BIG BLOW
 ATHON TICKLER LUST TRIANGLE MAMMOTH MOUNDS HOT HOLES
 ROUGH RIDERS SEX SANDWICH 69 ACTION JUICY PANTIES SPURTING LOADS
 REAMED MEAT BATH DIVE PANTRY CHEWS SIT ON MY [REDACTED]
 PUMPING [REDACTED] BUSH WHACKER 3 AT ONCE HOTEL HOOKERS BLACK HEAD
 BACKDOOR AFFAIR KING [REDACTED] EAT MY [REDACTED] OPEN & WILLING LIQUID LIPS
 BOTH HOLES PUMPING SEX GAZONZAS TWEAK MY BOOB
 BEND OVER GANG BANG LICK MY HOLE BLACK BUSTERS BLACK [REDACTED]
 RIDE ME BUN LOVERS LOVE ERECTIONS DIVE WOMB BROOM PLEASURE
 EAT ME FINGER FUN DOWN MY THROAT HOT FLESH TICKLING TONGUES FREAKY FOURSOME
 GREASED HOLES BUTT PLUG SLICK [REDACTED] ADVENTURES TWIN LICKING CRAVERS
 ANY 10 FOR \$12 10 VIDEOS ADD \$2
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 ANY 57 FOR \$26 57 VIDEOS ADD \$4
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 ALL 212 ONLY \$40 212 VIDEOS ADD \$6

TROPICAL TREAT BALL BLOWOUT DEEPER THROAT BUSTING OUT
 JERKING LOADS SPREAD IT WIDE HOT [REDACTED] ORAL NYMPHS
 SHE LOVES IT HARD HOT [REDACTED] VIXENS IN HEAT BABES
 NAKED NYMPHS THREE WAY THREE WAY SLUTS
 SLICK CHICKS SHAVED CHICKS SHAVED CHICKS GROUP JERK
 DEEP INSIDE GETTING OFF GETTING OFF EXPLODING SEX
 KINKY COEDS HARD BOFF HARD BOFF ALLEY
 EATER THAR SHE BLOWS THAR SHE BLOWS HARLE HONEYNS
 LUSTING LOINS WELCOME WAGON WELCOME WAGON X-RATED RUMPS
 SCREW MY [REDACTED] BEN WAH [REDACTED] BEN WAH [REDACTED] DARK MEAT
 FILL HER UP REAR ENTRY REAR ENTRY KINGSIZE BOOBS
 SILICON BOOBS 3-SOME 3-SOME SHAVED & SEXY
 BLONDE SANDWICH BACKSIDE BABES BACKSIDE BABES PLUGGED UP
 BUTTIN IN FEEL ME UP FEEL ME UP WELL HUNG STUDS
 BLACK LEZ DOWN MY POLE DOWN MY POLE TINGLING TUSHES
 PINK [REDACTED] LESBOFEST LESBOFEST TITANIC [REDACTED]
 SHOOT YOUR STUFF VOLCANIC LOADS VOLCANIC LOADS GUSHING GONADS
 HORNY SLUTS OCEANIC LOADS OCEANIC LOADS BANK
 CLIMAXING [REDACTED] FEEL THE HEAT FEEL THE HEAT SEX STARVED
 PINK TUNNEL TOOLS OF THE TRADE TOOLS OF THE TRADE FEST
 GROUP GROPE TAKE MY LOAD TAKE MY LOAD MILK MAIDS
 POONFEST BLACK STUDS BLACK STUDS MASSIVE MANHOOD
 BEACH BLANKET BANG LOVE SHOWERS LOVE SHOWERS STROKERS WILD
 TAKE IT ALL JOBS JOBS RAMRODDERS
 RAMMED REAMS BIG [REDACTED] BIG [REDACTED] HORNY HOUSEWIVES
 FINGER FANTASY TRIPLE PLAYS TRIPLE PLAYS BIG BLOW
 PETER EATERS KING SIZE KING SIZE MAMMOTH MOUNDS
 LIP SERVICE SUPER HEAD SUPER HEAD JUICY PANTIES
 TRIPLE SEX PLAY SPREAD [REDACTED] SPREAD [REDACTED] PANTRY CHEWS
 FOUNTAINS OF LOVE CREAMY OREO CREAMY OREO HOTEL HOOKERS
 CHOCOLATE PUDDING BLACKWHITE [REDACTED] BLACKWHITE [REDACTED] OPEN & WILLING
 KNOBS & KNOCKERS IN THE REAR IN THE REAR TWEAK
 SAUNA SEX LUST TRIANGLE LUST TRIANGLE HOT [REDACTED]
 TICKLER 69 ACTION 69 ACTION 3 AT ONCE
 SEX SANDWICH DIVE DIVE EAT MY [REDACTED]
 BATH 3 AT ONCE 3 AT ONCE GAZONZAS
 BUSH WHACKER EAT MY [REDACTED] EAT MY [REDACTED] LICK MY HOLE
 KING [REDACTED] GAZONZAS GAZONZAS LOVE ERECTIONS
 PUMPING SEX LICK MY HOLE LICK MY HOLE DOWN MY THROAT
 GANG BANG HOT FLESH HOT FLESH SLICK [REDACTED]

OUR
LOW
PRICES

ANY 10 FOR \$12
 ANY 24 FOR \$18
 ANY 57 FOR \$26
 ANY 115 FOR \$32
 ALL 212 ONLY \$40

Use entire ad to order. Send to:

MEGADEAL
DEPT. HXO P.O. BOX M877
GARY IN. 46401-0877

Rush Name Indicated, I enclose \$ [REDACTED] plus P/H
 CASH CHECK MONEY ORDER
 As payment in full, Canadians remit in US funds
 only. No foreign COD's COD, I enclose \$8
 extra, plus P/H
 Please specify format: BETA VHS

I am over 19 years old and request this material
 ADD \$2 for insurance and First Class handling

POSTAGE
&
HANDLING

10 VIDEOS ADD \$2
 24 VIDEOS ADD \$3
 57 VIDEOS ADD \$4
 115 VIDEOS ADD \$5
 212 VIDEOS ADD \$6

NAME _____

Addr./Apt.# _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

B-Date/Sign _____ Age _____

SIZZLING
SHE MALES

JUST

THIRTY
VIDEOS75¢
EACH IN QTY.

We've assembled the most bizarre collection of hot XXX full length She-Male videos and are making them available for a limited time at low introductory prices. If you're a connoisseur of this special treat then we know that after you take advantage of this tremendous buy, you'll order again and again from our huge library of tapes. Each 30 minute tape is just jammed with the most unbelievable She-Male action you've ever seen.

MONEYBACK GUARANTEE!

You must be delighted with your purchase or return it within 30 days for exchange, refund or credit. Minus P&H.

TRANS FEST HE-SHE [REDACTED]
 SURPRISE! TUBE STEAK
 PUMPING [REDACTED] 4 DOLLS
 UNDERCOVER & [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] BABES SIZZLING SHE-MALES
 CHICKS WITH [REDACTED] BULGING SKIRTS
 FEMME JOCKS HALF N HALF
 TOPS & BOTTOMS BORN MALE
 TRANS WAY LOVELY LELLANI
 FILLED PANTIES BEST OF JULIE BOND
 TRANSITORY STATES BEST OF SHARON LEE
 FAKE OUT TRANSEXUAL WRESTLING
 TOUR DE TRANS GENDER BENDER
 SULTRY DUDES BIZARRE BABES
 TRANS AFFAIR DEVANT DIVERSION

ALL MODELS ARE 18 YRS. OF AGE. RECORDS ON FILE.

PRICES:

ANY ONE FOR \$7
 ANY TEN FOR \$14
 ANY TWENTY FOR \$20
 ANY THIRTY FOR \$22.50

POSTAGE & HANDLING:

1 TO 10 VIDEOS \$4
 20 VIDEOS \$5
 30 VIDEOS \$6
 SPECIFY VHS BETA

Send entire ad & remittance to:
HANDS ON VIDEO DEPT. HXO
 P.O. BOX 12007 MERRILLVILLE, IN. 46411

NAME _____

ADD. _____

CITY _____

ST. / ZIP _____

SIGNATURE _____ AGE/B-DAY _____
 I am 18 yrs. of age & request this material

Petite Ladies Good Things COME In Small Packages!!

1-900
386-4600



The
Petite
Ladies
Line
Call now
for the
real names
and home
phone
numbers
of petite
ladies who
want to
meet you!
(\$2 a min.
Adults Only)

BOTTOMS UP!

Only one line gives you the real names and home phone numbers of women who share your deepest passion!

THE BOTTOM LINE

1-900
646-7800
(\$2 each minute)
You must be over 18

WHAT WILL YOU DO IF I'M BAD?



1-900
847-GIRL
(THAT'S 1-900-847-4475)

Call now to meet real women who want to know your answer. No paid operators. Just real women who need to know what you'll do if they're bad!

Only two dollars per minute. Adults Only Please

MARRIED? FOOD AROUND?



CALL 1-900
346-HOTS
(THAT'S 1-900-346-4687)

MEET AVAILABLE
GALS WHO
SHARE YOUR
SPECIAL
NEEDS!

(two dollars per minute)
Over 18 only please

QUICK RELEASE

"OH
BABY"

CALL NOW

1-900-230-LADY

(THAT'S 1-900-230-5239)
It's what you really want!
(Only \$2 a min.) Over 18 Only



TWO HEADS ARE BETTER

Double Your
Pleasure

CALL 1-900
463-LOVE

(THAT'S 1-900-463-5683)

"We're waiting"
Direct contact with
female room-
mates looking for
fun guys!

\$2 per minute.
Over 18 only



OVERWEIGHT MEN WANTED

Good Looking Ladies
Want You! Call 1-900-
646-7900



Now there's a
phoneline that
matches up
big men with
slender, attrac-
tive women
who adore a
big belly.

Call 1-900
646-7900

(\$2 a minute)
Over 18 Only Please

TEACHERS PET

And that's
just for
starters!
Give the
teacher
something
special...

**BIT
TICKS**

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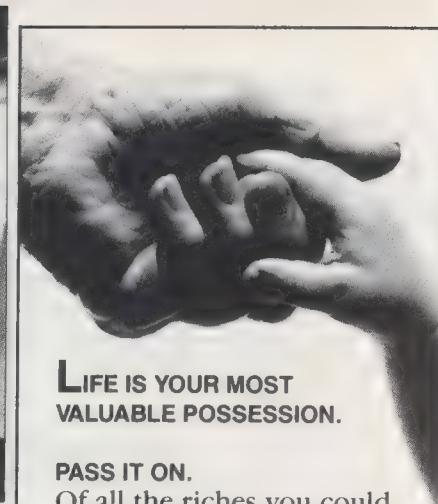
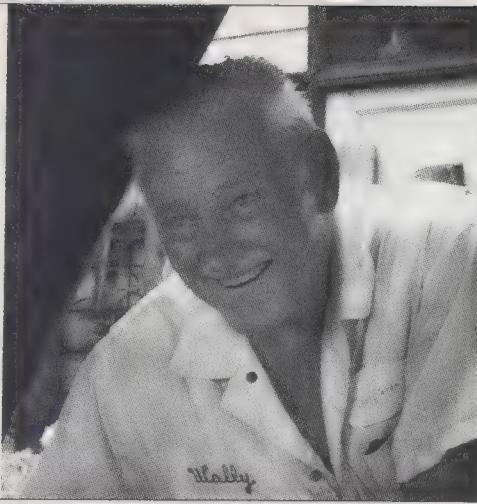
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KIDVID

continued from page 106

learn. Cappelli's original material for kids has that magic mix of simplicity, melody and charm that marks the best in kids' music from Raffi to Sharon, Lois and Bram. *All Aboard the Train* is a collection of live action music videos, in the *Kidsongs/Babysongs* vein, culled from

his local TV show, *Cappelli & Co.* With his huge bushy mustache and hefty build, Cappelli resembles Gene Shalit with a better haircut, and sings songs like "Brusha Your Teeth" with the gusto of a happy Italian uncle.

The gang doesn't come off quite as well in *Slap Me Five*, which mixes live segments with a studio audience and similar videos (in fact, "Brusha Your Teeth" is repeated exactly). It's a nice

representation of a typical *Cappelli & Co.* episode, but that doesn't bode well for repeatability.

No one has to be told about *Sesame Street*. Twenty years of high-quality children's education and fun need no introduction. It seems downright curmudgeonly to say that *Monster Hits* is not one of the series' best offshoots, but when sheer perfection is a standard, one can get a little persnickety. To this viewer, at least, the *Sesame Street* monsters, with the exception of Elmo, Grover and Cookie, don't offer the full range of characterization that marks the other Muppets, and so building an entire tape around their songs lacks that extra spark that fuels *Sing Yourself Silly*.

So, I'd prefer to sing myself silly, but if you're a fan of *Sesame Street's* furry denizens, or of songs like "That Furry Blue Mommy of Mine" and "Comb Your Face," don't be afraid to check out *Monster Hits*. That's what makes horse races—or kidvid.

DESERT CLASSIC

continued from page 72

serviced by a separate, self-contained system made up of a TV set, a VCR, CD and audiotape decks and an AM/FM tuner.

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Not all custom installations need to be this elaborate. (We'll be looking as well at less costly entertainment centers in future issues.) But when they are, the results can be spectacular and unique. Did the owner like what he got? "He flipped," says Taylor. "He ended up with more than he thought was possible."

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GO VIDEO

continued from page 76

5 kilohertz at SP, to 2 kHz at LP, and to 1.7 kHz at EP. The VCR-2's specifications promise a response to 12 kHz at SP, 7 kHz at LP and 5 kHz at EP. But at these frequencies, signal strength is 10 to 13 dB below the reference level.

The audio signal-to-noise ratio is 38.4 dB with Dolby noise reduction off, and 3 dB higher with Dolby on. The total harmonic distortion is 1.9 percent. We cannot recall previously measuring VCR frequency responses this narrow.

Conclusion. The GV 2000 is the only dual-deck VHS VCR on the U.S. market, and Go Video deserves special praise for fighting long and hard to make this possible. The VCR-2 copies tapes at the touch of a button, as long as the original is not Macrovision-encoded. Editing is also very easy, but not precise enough for accurate cuts. Its 16-event timer is another welcome first, as is its dual-speed search. But picture quality is only fair to weak, and audio quality is poor. Yet for convenient one-touch copying, this machine is the only one of its kind, and is recommended. ■

3 AMIGAS

continued from page 61

program produces a color image.

"I gather up all the family pictures I need and digitize them," Hauk says. "Then I transfer the pictures into an art program." She crops the pictures and designs borders and titles. Then she or-

ganizes them chronologically, interspersing them with title screens and footage converted from 8mm film. Hauk uses the art program to create snappy transitions, including spins and wipes, and adds music that fits the decade in which the pictures were shot. Finally, she records the work on videotape.

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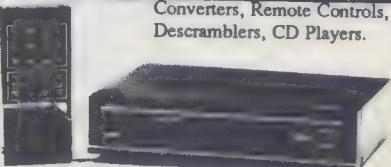
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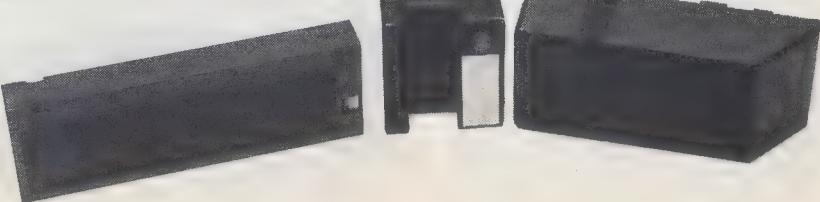
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MAIL-ORDER GUIDELINES

At VIDEO Magazine, we believe our readers should get what they order from our mail-order advertisers at the prices indicated and in a timely fashion. We stand behind that belief by taking steps to determine that an advertiser is reputable and reliable before accepting an advertisement. Additionally, if we learn that an advertiser engages in a regular pattern of unfair or improper business practices, we will deny that advertiser the opportunity to advertise.

Nonetheless, the responsibility for fair dealing ultimately lies with the advertisers themselves, and unfortunately VIDEO Magazine cannot guarantee their behavior. Therefore, we feel it is important for our readers to know what their rights are and to follow the tips set forth below for purchasing merchandise by mail. Further, we are prepared to use our best efforts to assist any customer who has been improperly or unfairly dealt with by one of our advertisers.

Our requirements for advertising in VIDEO Magazine and our offer of assistance to aggrieved purchasers do not in any way limit either the obligation of an advertiser to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations or our customers' ability to enforce their rights under those laws.

MAIL-ORDER BILL OF RIGHTS

Under federal law, if you order advertised merchandise by mail, the advertiser must ship your order when promised in the advertisement—or, if no delivery date is promised, within 30 days of receiving your order. If the advertiser fails to ship your order in a timely fashion, you may cancel your order and are entitled to a prompt refund.

If the initial shipping date cannot be met, the advertiser must notify you in writing and give you the option of either cancelling your order and receiving a full refund or agreeing to a new shipping date.

If the new shipping date is less than 30 days after the original shipping date, the merchandise may be shipped to you unless you notify the advertiser in writing of your desire to cancel. If the new shipping date is more than 30 days after the original shipping date, or no new shipping date is provided, your order must be cancelled by the advertiser unless you inform the advertiser in writing that you still want the merchandise.

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Note: The 30-day time period does not begin to run on a credit card sale until the advertiser charges your account. Also, these regulations do not apply to C.O.D. orders.

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Note: These regulations do not pertain to orders placed over the telephone and charged to a credit card.

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3. Check with the advertiser regarding any warranties offered or available for purchase.
4. Check whether the advertiser has a return policy.
5. Keep a record of your order and all other transactions and get the names of all persons with whom you speak.
6. Never send cash. Pay by check or money order or with a credit card so you will have a record of your transaction. If you pay by credit card, you may have a greater measure of recourse in the event the advertiser does not perform. (Check the complaint procedures of your credit card companies.)
7. If you receive damaged or improper merchandise, contact the advertiser as soon as possible.
8. Get a receipt from the shipper whenever you return merchandise.

9. Since VIDEO Magazine will not continue to accept advertising from businesses that have engaged in a regular pattern of unfair or improper dealing with our readers, try to determine which have been long-standing advertisers.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM

1. Allow 30 days for receipt of order or delay notification.
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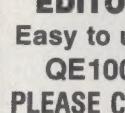
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Forget the late fee, this tape is haunted!

BY JAN NEWBEGIN

Admit it. You're one of them. One of the multitude of renters who have returned movies late to your video store with some lame excuse, hoping the clerk wouldn't charge you for the extra rental time.

And did it work? Of course not.

You probably even think the clerk was needlessly harsh for insisting on the fine. Think again. The ingenious, irresistible alibi you cooked up was as worn out as an old sneaker. You're lucky the clerk didn't charge you double.

I know. I'm the person on the other side of the counter, and I've heard your excuse dozens of times before. If I were to waive late charges every time someone pleaded a family emergency, I'd be out hundreds of dollars. We're sick of hearing that you always rent too many tapes to watch in one night, or that the tape got stuck in your VCR. Use some imagination the next time you approach a counter with a tardy tape. We'll even start you off with a set of deluxe alternatives to your tired, old standard excuses. You don't have to use the ones below, but at least be original.

Standard: "I forgot I had it out. It was still in the VCR when I found it."

Deluxe: "I found this tape in the VCR when I came to. I have total amnesia. Please tell me who rented it so I can discover my true identity."

Standard: "It wasn't working right, anyway."

Deluxe: "I think this tape is haunted. When I played it, *The Twilight Zone* theme started, all the lights dimmed, doors slammed and my couch levitated."

Standard: "I thought my wife/husband returned it."

Deluxe: "At the lab, we recently succeeded in training gorillas to take rental tapes back to stores. We thought

Bruno returned it, but apparently he has escaped. You haven't seen him, have you?"

Standard: "My car broke down on the way here."

Deluxe: "My car was hijacked by aliens who performed unspeakable experiments on me. After watching the videotape, they deemed our world unworthy of further exploration and beamed me and my car down to Mountain Home, Idaho."

Standard: "I had to work late at the office."

Deluxe: "I had an all-night stakeout."

unsettling experience might send me over the edge into violence and despair. You won't charge me a late fee, will you?"

Standard: "I had the flu."

Deluxe: "I had a rare and highly contagious fungus on my face."

Standard: "It was an honest mistake. I'm always on time with my tapes. I've never done this before."

Deluxe: "I confess, I did it on purpose. It's part of a conspiracy against your store. Your competitors hired me."

Standard: "It wasn't a very good movie, anyway."



Standard: "It was such a good movie, I just had to watch it again."

Deluxe: "My wife/husband threatened to withhold sex until we watched it again."

Standard: "I dropped it off at the wrong store."

Deluxe: "Subliminal messages on the tape compelled me to mail it to Guam."

Standard: "It's late? Really? I thought I checked it out yesterday."

Deluxe: "It's late. What day is it? Oh my God, I must have had another blackout. My psychiatrist says that any

Deluxe: "It was so bad I thought I'd save other viewers the agony of watching it by keeping it at my house for a few days."

Standard: "I know the owner of this store."

Deluxe: "I know the owner of Paramount Home Video."

Industrial Strength: "I know Freddie."

No matter how unique your excuse, expect to pay your late charge. After all, unless the computer is lying or a couple of days disappeared from the calendar, the tape is still late. On the other hand, maybe you'll get lucky and catch me on a good day. I might only charge you half. ■

Jan Newbegin is a video store manager in Dublin, California.

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